




Red Flags

FBI Investigates California Shooting as Act of Terrorism

David Bowdich, center, assistant director of the FBI's Los Angeles office, talks to reporters during a news conference Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, in San Bernardino, Calif. The FBI said Friday it is officially investigating the mass shooting in California as an act of terrorism, while a U.S. law enforcement official said the woman who carried out the attack with her husband had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and its leader on Facebook.

(AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)


Page 3



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Paris attacks: Belgians seeking 2 new suspects in probe

LORNE
JOHN DAHLBURG
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgian and French authorities were hunting two new suspects Friday in the Paris attacks who they say used fake identity cards around Europe and sent money to a relative of the man who orchestrated the attacks the day before the ringleader died in a shootout with French police.

The two men, carrying

COOK

four days after the Paris attacks, the false identity card in the name of Bouzid was used at a Western Union office in the Brussels area to send a 750-euro (\$817) money order to Hasna Ait Boulhacen, cousin of the purported attack ringleader, Abdelhamid Abaaoud.

Both Boulhacen and Abaaoud died a day later when French police stormed their hideout in a Paris suburb.

the information will be kept on file for six months.

Luxembourg Deputy Prime Minister Etienne Schneider, who chaired the meeting in Brussels, expressed his "pride that after so many years of negotiations, we have now been able to conclude an agreement." The passenger record agreement proposal was first made in 2007, but it languished in the European Parliament for years as EU lawmakers struggled



Belgium police officers walk through the Galleries Royale Saint-Hubert in Brussels, Belgium. Belgian and French authorities were hunting two new suspects Friday related to the Paris attacks.

(AP Photo/Michael Probst)

bogus ID in the names of Samir Bouzid and Soufiane Kayal, had been traveling in a Mercedes with another Paris attacks fugitive, Salah Abdeslam, when the car was checked Sept. 9 at the Hungarian-Austrian border, the Belgian Federal Prosecutor's office said in a statement Friday.

The same Kayal ID was used to rent a house in the Belgian town of Auvellais that authorities have searched as a possible site for making the suicide bombs used in the Nov. 13 Paris attacks, the prosecutor's office said.

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for those gun-and-bomb attacks that killed 130 people and wounded hundreds in Paris.

Belgian authorities said about 6 p.m. on Nov. 17,

The two new suspects "are being actively sought by Belgian and French police services," the prosecutor's office said.

Spurred into action by the Paris attacks, the interior ministers of the European Union moved Friday to grant law-enforcement agencies access to information gathered by airlines — data like passengers' names, travel dates, itinerary, credit cards and contact details.

The sharing of such data is meant to allow better scrutiny of known or suspected extremists.

Under the passenger data deal, details would be collected from European carrier flights entering or leaving the EU, as well as from flights between member countries. Charter flights will be included, and all

to strike the right balance between security concerns and privacy rights. The assembly must still endorse the deal but that is likely to happen within the next month.

At least 5,000 Europeans are believed to have trained or fought in Syria and Iraq but authorities are struggling to track their movements and prove their activities. French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve described the new system as "indispensable in the fight against terrorism." The EU already has such passenger data deals with the U.S., Canada and Australia.

In Paris, patrons began returning as La Bonne Biere, a corner cafe in the trendy central district targeted by the gunmen, reopened Friday. □

UN says 16 mass graves found after Iraq's Sinjar freed from IS

SALAR SALIM
Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq (AP) — The U.N. human rights office in Iraq said on Friday that it has received reports of 16 mass graves discovered near the town of Sinjar after it was liberated from the Islamic State group last month.

The reports were the latest among many instances of mass graves being uncovered in territory wrested from IS militants in Iraq and Syria — thousands of people have been killed in summary and extrajudicial killings by the Sunni militants and the graves have been a dark testimony to the group's brutality.

In June 2014, some 1,700 Iraqi soldiers were captured and then killed by IS militants when they overran Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit. At the time, the soldiers were trying to flee from Camp Speicher, a nearby army base where they were deployed. Mass graves with hundreds of Iraqi soldiers' bodies were found after the city was liberated in April.

There were no immediate details about how many bodies might be inside the newly found Sinjar graves, according to spokeswoman Cecile Pouilly of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

She did not provide the source of the reports but said that her office has called on Iraq's government to investigate.

Sinjar Mayor Mahma Khalil told The Associated Press that a total of 17 mass and collective graves have been uncovered inside Sinjar and on the outskirts of the town. He did not give any further information or estimates on the number of bodies the graves could hold.

The IS group captured Sinjar during its rampage across northern Iraq in the summer of 2014 and killed and captured thousands of members of the Yazidi religious minority, including women who were forced into sexual slavery. The extremist group's rapid expansion in Iraq's north, which included a push toward the city of Irbil — the regional capital of Iraq's Kurdish north — spurred the U.S.-led coalition to launch a campaign of airstrikes against IS in Iraq and later Syria in August 2014. Whenever a discovery of mass graves is made, experts warn that proper excavation and identification of the bodies could take months or longer as many of the sites identified are in close proximity to active front lines. The U.N. uses the term mass grave to refer to a location where three or more victims of what the world body defines as extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions are buried — not those who have been killed in combat, attacks such as bombings or armed confrontation. Pouilly, the U.N. office's spokeswoman, also expressed concern about increasing discrimination, harassment and violence against Sunni Arabs by other groups in parts of Iraq that have been freed from IS' control, as Sinjar was in mid-November.

She cautioned that many Sunnis who once lived under IS control were forced to obey the extremist group at the risk of punishment or death. Now freed, they are "perceived as having supported" the militant group, which is unfair, Pouilly added.

Among the first mass graves uncovered in Sinjar — within days of IS forces being pushed out of the town — was one near the town's center that has been estimated to contain the bodies of 78 elderly women, and another, about 15 kilometers (10 miles) outside of Sinjar, with between 50 and 60 bodies of men, women and children, according to Qasim Samir, the Sinjar head of intelligence. □

California killing spurs concerns about fiancé visa program in US

**GARANCE BURKE
ALICIA A. CALDWELL**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The woman who carried out the San Bernardino massacre with her husband came to the U.S. last year on a special visa for fiances of U.S. citizens, raising questions about whether the process can adequately vet people who may sympathize with terrorist groups.

Authorities said Friday that Pakistani citizen Tashfeen Malik, 27, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and its leader under an alias account on Facebook just moments before she and her husband, Syed Farook, opened fire on a holiday banquet for his co-workers Wednesday, killing 14. They later died in a gun battle with police.

Malik, who had been living with her family in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, passed several government background checks and entered the U.S. in July 2014 on a K-1 visa, which allowed her to travel to the U.S. and get married within 90 days of arrival.

Malik was subjected to a vetting process the U.S. government describes as vigorous, including in-person interviews, fingerprints, checks against U.S. terrorist watch lists and reviews of her family members, travel history and places where she lived and worked. The process began when she applied for a visa to move to the United States and marry Farook, a 28-year-old Pakistani-American restaurant health inspector who was raised in California.

Foreigners applying from countries recognized as home to Islamic extremists, such as Pakistan, undergo additional scrutiny before the State Department and Homeland Security Department approve permission for a K-1 visa.

"This is not a visa that someone would use because it is easy to get into the US, because there are more background checks on this type of visa than just about anything else," said Palma Yanni, a Washington-based attorney who has processed dozens of K-1 visas. "But fingerprints and biometrics and names aren't going to tell you what is in somebody's head unless they somewhere have taken some action."

The shooting will undoubtedly have implications on the debate over the Obama administration's plans to accept more Syrian refugees. The vetting process for refugees is similar, though not identical, to the one for fiance visa applicants. Republican lawmakers and governors across the U.S., as well as advocates for stricter immigration enforcement, have challenged the effectiveness of the vetting process.

Refugees submit to in-person interviews overseas, where they provide biographical details about themselves, including their families, friendships, social or political activities, employment, phone numbers and email accounts.

They provide biometric information, including fingerprints. Syrians are subject to additional classified controls.

Those who come to the U.S. on a fiance visa must marry a U.S. citizen within 90 days or leave the country. Following the marriage, the immigrant becomes a conditional resident for two years and must ask the U.S. government to remove those conditions at the end of that waiting period and undergo another background check. If the request is approved, the immigrant receives a green card. Immigrants can apply to become U.S. citizens five years after winning a green card. □

California shootings: FBI investigates attack as act of terrorism

**AMANDA MYERS
TAMI ABDOLLAH**
Associated Press
SAN BERNARDINO, California (AP) — The FBI announced Friday that it is investigating the mass shooting at a California office party as an act of terrorism, but the agency's director said there is no indication that the husband and wife who killed 14 were part of a

anyone affiliated with the Islamic State communicated back to Malik, but he said there was no indication yet that the plot was directed by ISIS or any other foreign terror group. "The investigation so far has developed indications of radicalization by the killers and of potential inspiration by foreign terrorist organizations," Comey said.

ily urged the public not to rush to judgment.

"If the most evidence there is to any affiliation is a Facebook account under another person's name ... then that's hardly anything at all," attorney David Chesley said.

Farook and Malik rented a townhome where investigators said they found an arsenal of ammunition and



Attorneys David Chesley, left, and Mohammad Abuershaid speak to reporters, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, in Los Angeles. The two are attorneys for the family of Syed Farook, one of the heavily armed shooters that opened fire Wednesday at a banquet, killing multiple people and seriously wounding others in a precision assault.

(AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)

larger plot or members of a terror cell.

Authorities did not cite specific evidence that led them to the terrorism focus, but a U.S. law enforcement official said the wife, Tashfeen Malik, under a Facebook alias had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and its leader. A Facebook official said Malik praised the group in a post at 11 a.m. Wednesday, when the couple were believed to have stormed a social service center and opened fire.

Malik and her husband, Syed Farook, died several hours later in a gunbattle with police.

The IS-affiliated news service Aamaq called Malik and Farook "supporters" of their cause but stopped short of claiming responsibility for the attack.

FBI Director James Comey would not discuss whether

Despite mounting signs of the couple's radicalization, there "is a lot of evidence that doesn't quite make sense," Comey added.

The U.S. official who revealed the Facebook post was not authorized to discuss the case publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Facebook official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not allowed under corporate policy to be quoted by name, said the company discovered Wednesday's post on Thursday, removed the profile from public view and reported its contents to law enforcement.

Attorneys representing Farook's family said Friday that none of his family members had any indication either he or his wife held extremist views.

Attorneys for Farook's fam-

homemade bombs. On Friday morning, the property's owner allowed reporters inside. An upstairs bedroom had a crib, boxes of diapers and a computer. The couple had a 6-month-old daughter.

The FBI said analysts were trying to retrieve data from two cellphones found near there that had been crushed in an apparent attempt to destroy the information inside.

Farook had no criminal record, and neither he nor his wife was under scrutiny by local or federal law enforcement before the attack, authorities said.

Malik, 27, was a Pakistani who grew up in Saudi Arabia and came to the U.S. in 2014 on a fiancée visa. Farook, a 28-year-old restaurant health inspector, was born in Chicago to Pakistani parents and raised in California. □

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Congress revives contentious US Export-Import Bank

ERICA WERNER

AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a victory for the business establishment over tea party conservatives, President Barack Obama signed legislation Friday reviving the U.S. Export-Import Bank five months after Congress allowed it to expire. The bank is a small federal agency that makes and guarantees loans to help foreign customers buy U.S. goods. A measure extending it through 2019 was included in a massive transportation bill that cleared the House and Senate late Thursday and was signed Friday by Obama.

The development was cheered by business groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which say the Ex-Im Bank is necessary for U.S. competitiveness since most overseas competitors rely on similar government help. But conservatives pushed by



A man walks out of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. in Washington. With little fanfare, Congress has revived the federal Export-Import Bank five months after allowing it to expire. That hands a victory to business groups and a defeat to tea party conservatives and the billionaire GOP donor Koch Brothers.

the billionaire GOP Koch Brothers decried the development, arguing that the bank amounts to government interference in the free market and many of its

beneficiaries are large corporations that don't really need the help.

"The Export-Import Bank's revival in this bill is especially offensive to taxpayers

who want to end corporate welfare handouts and let the free market finance overseas investments by American companies," said Sen. Marco Rubio, a

Republican.

Rubio is among the Republican presidential candidates and other leading Republicans who've lined up against the bank, a once-obscure entity that's become a cause celebre for conservatives led by the Koch Brothers in recent years. For decades it was renewed by bipartisan agreement, with little or no debate and often not even a roll-call vote. But after the Koch Brothers and other conservative groups began to seize on the opportunity to kill off a federal agency, leading Republicans such as House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy who once supported the bank, turned against it.

Amid that pressure and with tea party lawmakers on the ascent on Capitol Hill, Congress failed to act when the bank's charter was up for renewal June 30, allowing it to expire for the first time in its 81-year history. □

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)



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Planned Parenthood clinics are open, on guard after shooting

KRISTEN WYATT
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Bulletproof glass and armed security are nothing new at medical clinics that provide abortions. But in the wake of a deadly shooting last week at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado, clinics nationwide are redoubling security efforts, checking surveillance cameras and reviewing evacuation plans. Police say they're adding patrols to clinics to guard against those who might be inspired to mimic a shootout that killed three people and injured nine. For the folks who work in the nation's 400 or so clinics that provide abortions, it's a time of resolve and also reflection about the dangers they face. "It is an unusual time," said Vicki Cowart, CEO for Planned Parenthood in the Rocky Mountain Region.

"There a vitriol, there's a hate speech in our country going on right now that could be causing more violence than we might otherwise see." But the clinic in Colorado Springs remains closed, heavily damaged during an hours-long standoff last Friday.

The FBI sent a bulletin in September warning such clinics that "it is likely criminal or suspicious incidents will continue to be directed against reproductive health care providers, their staff and facilities."

There have been 11 murders and more than 220 bombings and arson attacks at abortion facilities in the U.S. since 1977, according to the National Abortion Foundation.

NAF President Vicki Saporta said her group sent advisories to clinics and hospitals providing abortions to be on heightened alert following the Colorado shooting.

Federal funds frozen, child-support data contractors fired in Texas mess

DALLAS (AP) — Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's office says the federal government has frozen funds and the state has dismissed 11 technology contractors amid delays in upgrading the state's child support data system. The shakeup comes as state House members are set to begin an investigation into how the costs for a project known as T2 climbed to \$310 million. Initial estimates said the project would cost just over \$202 million. The project was supposed to streamline the data system used to process child-support payments and support investigations. Paxton's office informed

the state's Legislative Budget Board of the federal move on Friday. The contractors and at least one director had been dismissed in recent weeks, the Dallas Morning News reported. The dismissals came after reports of failures by state officials and vendor, Accenture, to deliver promised work on time. The project was launched by Paxton's predecessor, Gov. Greg Abbott. Late Friday, Accenture said that it was selected for the project through a competitive bid process in 2010 with an original contract worth \$69 million that later was revised to \$79 million — but that it had only been paid \$25 million to date. □



A sign in support of Planned Parenthood stands south of a clinic in northwest Colorado Springs, Colo. Bulletproof glass and armed security are nothing new at medical clinics that provide abortions. But in the wake of a deadly shooting last week at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado, clinics nationwide are redoubling security efforts, checking surveillance cameras and reviewing evacuation plans.

(AP Photo/David Zalubowski)

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American Living:

Farmington, Maine celebrates inventor of the earmuff

DAVID SHARP

Associated Press

FARMINGTON, Maine (AP)

— Earmuffs have come a long way in 142 years.

Chester Greenwood was a 15-year-old bestowed with generous ears when he decided he had had enough of the biting cold while ice skating in 1873. The first earmuffs were then born, fashioned from farm wire with fur sewn on them by his grandmother.

Greenwood made improvements with a steel band and adjustable hinges, and sold hundreds of thousands of "Champion Ear Protectors."

These days, similar versions are still sold. Others wrap around the back of the

neck, eliminating mussed hair. There are versions with fleece, fur and down. Some have built-in ear buds for music.

It's worth celebrating. So Greenwood's hometown of Farmington, in the northeastern state of Maine, is doing just that this weekend, as it has for nearly 40 years, with a parade in which residents proudly wear earmuffs.

"It's unique. How many other little towns can celebrate earmuffs? Seriously," said Nancy Porter, author of the self-published "Chester: More Than Earmuffs."

While Greenwood is forever linked to his signature invention, he



In this December 2015 photo, Ronald Greenwood a great-grandson of earmuff inventor Chester Greenwood, models a pair of original ear protectors in his barn in Farmington, Maine. Chester Greenwood's hometown will celebrate the inventor on Saturday.

(AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)



In this December 2015 photo, a portrait of Chester Greenwood, the inventor of the earmuff, hangs at the municipal offices in his hometown of Farmington, Maine.

(AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

also created other things. By some accounts, he came up with more than 100 contraptions, but he received patents for only five of them. In addition to his ear protectors, he patented a rake, an advertising matchbox, a

tea kettle and a device designed to drill holes in the ends of wooden spools, Porter said.

He also was a businessman. He ran a bicycle shop, built a plumbing and heating business, and created a local telephone

company. His earmuff factory closed a few years after his death in 1937.

The legacy of the dapper-dressed inventor faded over the years. But it was revived when the Maine Legislature declared Chester Greenwood Day on the first day of winter in 1977.

Fittingly, the first parade was held in a snowstorm. A snowplow led the parade to clear a path, and students from the University of Maine at Farmington participated on skis.

These days, the event is held on the first Saturday in December.

All parade participants must incorporate earmuffs in their floats. Afterward, an earmuff flag is raised at the courthouse. There's also a polar dip on Clearwater Lake, and the town Christmas tree will be lighted. □

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US Financial Front: While job growth lifts most of US economy, oil patch suffers

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The falling oil and gasoline prices that for months have coincided with strong U.S. hiring have helped most Americans.

But they've come at a painful cost for workers in the energy and mining sector: 122,300 lost jobs in the past year.

Even as workers nationwide

duction running high.

One measure of the damage: Even as the overall U.S. stock market rocketed up 2 percent on Friday, an index of oil and gas stocks tracked by the New York Stock Exchange fell 0.5 percent.

The industry's layoffs are expected to pile up as energy companies try to shore up their finances in light of the sharply lower prices.

next several days, bringing them to their lowest level since March 2009, said Tom Kloza, global head of energy analysis at the Oil Price Information Service.

"There is going to be a lot more money for consumers to spend," Kloza said. "Whether they spend it and that leads to more jobs is an open question."

The outlook is rather different in oil country.

crease hiring. He expects companies to automate more work with robots and other machines.

"The industry will be more efficient; it won't need as many people as it did before," Bullock said.

The world's appetite for all fossil fuels has been eroded by anemic economic growth. China has slowed, Europe is stumbling and Japan has lapsed into re-

cession. Yet OPEC ended its meeting Friday with plans to keep the oil flowing. OPEC will maintain its current production levels of 31.5 million barrels a day, roughly a third of the global supply. By preserving market share for members such as Saudi Arabia, OPEC will continue to flood the market with more oil than people want, which then depresses prices. □



A pair of tanker trucks parked next to pumps at an oil-producing well in McKenzie County, N.D. Lower fossil fuel prices have come at a painful cost: 122,300 lost jobs in the energy sector over the past year. The November 2015 jobs report showed a sharp contrast between the overall economy and the ailing fossil fuels industry. (AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast)

are earning slightly more than they did a year ago, average wages have tumbled 1.5 percent to \$26.72 an hour for energy production workers.

The November jobs report that the government released Friday illustrates the divide between the broad economy and the ailing fossil fuels industry: Overall, U.S. employers added a robust 211,000 jobs, and the unemployment rate held steady at a healthy 5 percent. But the energy industry, reeling from falling oil prices and weakening global demand, shed 11,300 jobs.

In just 18 months, oil prices have cratered from \$107 a barrel to roughly \$40. And gasoline prices have plunged from around \$3.70 a gallon to \$2.05. Those prices could be poised to fall further, with OPEC deciding Friday to keep pro-

"This is likely going to continue for six months or so as things settle out," said Ken Medlock, an economist and Senior director at Rice University's Center for Energy Studies in Houston.

Medlock said the rapid hiring that energy companies embarked on five years ago as fracking unlocked oil and natural gas from shale won't likely return soon. There will be less impetus to develop fields and increase production as long as prices stay low.

For most American consumers and companies, cheaper energy has been an unexpected gift. Drivers are paying less for gasoline. Jet fuel costs have plummeted for airlines and shipping firms. Heating oil expenses have dipped ahead of winter.

Average gas prices nationwide are likely to slide below \$2 a gallon in the

Since August, Texas' unemployment rate has risen as the state has shed oil and related manufacturing jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. More than 17 percent of the mining jobs — which include oil and natural gas — have disappeared from North Dakota in the past year.

Other fossil fuels, including natural gas and coal, have also collapsed in price. The result is fewer mining jobs in coal-rich states such as West Virginia and Kentucky.

Bruce Bullock, director of the Maguire Energy Institute at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, said he expects more industry bankruptcies and mergers, both of which will cost some employees their jobs. Even if prices recover, Bullock said he doubts that the industry will quickly in-

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A copy of this appraisal report with a further specification of the jewelry is available at the office of notary Mr. T.R. Johnson.

Seriously interested parties will be given the opportunity to view the jewelry on Friday December 11, 2015 at 11 AM at the offices of Banco di Caribe, Vondellaan 36, Aruba.

Those interested have the obligation to register themselves no later than Thursday December 10, 4 PM, at the office notary mr. T.R. Johnson by filling in a registration form. Interested parties will also have the obligation to identify themselves.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- The auction is subject to the auction conditions which will be determined by acting civil law notary T.R. Johnson. These auction conditions are available for inspection at the office of the aforementioned acting civil law notary situated at Italiestraat 50 units 10 & 10-A, Aruba from December 14, 2015.
- The auction will take place by raising bids (in Dutch: "bij opbod").
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Germany Oks military mission against Islamic State group



German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, casts her vote at the German Federal Parliament in Berlin, Germany, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. Germany stepped up its contribution to the fight against the Islamic State group on Friday, with lawmakers overwhelmingly voting in favor of providing broad noncombat support to the U.S.-led coalition flying airstrikes against the militants.

(AP Photo/Michael Sohn)

DAVID RISING
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Germany stepped up its contribution to the fight against the Islamic State group on Friday, with lawmakers overwhelmingly voting in favor of sending reconnaissance jets, a tanker plane and a frigate to provide broad noncom-

bat support to the U.S.-led coalition flying airstrikes against the militants. The move answers a call for help from France following last month's deadly attacks in Paris. IS militants claimed responsibility for the Nov. 13 attacks that killed 130 people and wounded hundreds. On Friday, Belgian and

French authorities said they were hunting two new suspects in the Paris carnage. The men used fake identity cards and sent money to a relative of the man who orchestrated the attacks the day before the ringleader died in a shootout with French police, the Belgian prosecutor's office said.

The German Parliament voted 445 in support of the mission against IS and 146 against, with seven abstentions. The plan received wide support from the ranks of Chancellor Angela Merkel's governing coalition, a week after the German leader assured French President Francois Hollande that Germany would "act quickly" to help its ally. German opposition lawmakers, however, questioned the effectiveness of military operations against the extremists. "You won't fight IS that way. You'll only strengthen it," Left Party lawmaker Sahra Wagenknecht told Parliament. Her criticism echoed the concerns voiced by Nicolas Henin, a French journalist who was held hostage by Islamic State militants for 10 months until being freed in April 2014. Henin told The Associated Press that while using military muscle against the group shouldn't be ruled out, it should only be a small part of a broader strategy. "The party that will win is not the party that will have the most powerful, the most modern or the most expensive weaponry or

even the bravest fighters," Henin said. "The side that will win ... is the party that will have the Syrian people on its side. By bombing Syria, we are pushing the Syrians into the hands of IS." The 134 million-euro (\$145 million) German mission will see two Tornado reconnaissance planes sent to Turkey's Incirlik base as early as next week. The frigate is already en route to join French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle. "The goal... is to fight and contain IS, and destroy their safe havens and their ability to lead worldwide terror operations," Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen told reporters Thursday before heading to Ankara for talks with her Turkish counterpart. She also met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to talk about stationing German troops there and other aspects of the deployment, the Defense Ministry said Friday. In all, Germany plans to send up to six Tornado reconnaissance planes and a tanker aircraft, as well as the frigate to help protect the French aircraft carrier, but won't actively engage in combat.

PM says Turkey cannot be 'brought to its knees' by Russia

SUZAN FRASER
Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey's prime minister struck a defiant tone Friday in his nation's growing spat with Russia, declaring that his country cannot be "brought to its knees" by Russian economic sanctions imposed in response to Turkey's downing of a Russian warplane. In a speech during a visit to Baku, Azerbaijan,

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu again defended Turkey's action and said Turkey won't apologize for defending its borders. Davutoglu insisted Turkey did not know the nationality of the plane it downed inside Turkish airspace. He suggested for the first time, however, that the plane was brought down because Turkey could not "morally" al-

low the plane to trespass on Turkish territory before bombing areas in Syria where ethnic Turkish populations live. "No one can blame Turkey, no one can expect an apology from Turkey," Davutoglu said in the speech, which was televised on Turkish television. "We would not apologize for defending our borders." "Those who believe that economic sanctions


against an honorable nation like Turkey can bring it to its knees will be mistaken," Davutoglu said. Turkey insists the plane violated its airspace despite repeated warnings. The shoot-down, the first time a NATO country has downed a Russian plane in more than half a century, sparked a bitter falling out between the two nations, which had developed robust economic ties.

Russia has retaliated by deploying long-range air defense missile systems to its base in Syria, 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of the border with Turkey. It also slammed an array of economic sanctions on Turkey, including a ban on imports of fruit and vegetables and the sales of tourism packages. Russia also scrapped talks with Turkey on building a pipeline to export Russian natural gas to Europe.

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Greek minister: EU provided inadequate help for refugees

ELENA BECATOROS
Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) —

The European Union has provided far less than is needed to help Greece deal with the massive influx of refugees and other migrants this year, the country's European affairs minister said Friday.

Nikos Xydakis gave the example of staff from the European border agency Frontex, saying that Greece needed 750 but initially received only 350, increasing by a further 100 or so in recent days.

"Since May Greece has persistently been asking for technical, technological and staffing help, and what it has received from Europe is far less than what was asked for," Xydakis told The Associated Press in an interview.

Greece is the main point of entry into the EU for people fleeing war and poverty at home, with the vast majority of the 700,000 people who have entered the country this year reaching Greek islands from the nearby Turkish coast. Few want to remain in the financially stricken nation, with nearly all heading on an overland route through the Balkans to the more prosperous European north.

The government says it has also received fewer fingerprinting machines than it needs to identify and register people, and not enough help to patrol the Aegean.

"There is an inability of the member states and the European mechanisms to respond to the needs of this storm," Xydakis said.

He insisted Greece is meeting its obligations and adhering to all agreements made on the issue, saying small delays were "com-

pletely explainable" by the sheer volume of arrivals.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry was in Athens on Friday for talks on issues including the migrant crisis, and said the U.S. was giving \$24 million to the U.N. refugee agency.

Greece's response to the refugee crisis has come under criticism from some parts of the EU. Suggestions have surfaced in recent media reports that Greece could be suspended from the EU's borderless Schengen area unless it improves its border policing.

A suspension, which would mean travelers from Greece would pass through passport control on arrival in other Schengen countries, would have little practical effect on the migrant flow as Greece does not share any borders with other Schengen nations. But it would be a humiliating blow.

In Berlin, German government spokesman Steffen Seibert was asked about reports that some EU countries want Greece out of Schengen, but didn't answer when asked whether Germany was among them.

"The chancellor and other members of the German government have repeatedly noted how important freedom of movement under Schengen is to us, and that the possibility of preserving this, which we want, depends very directly on how we as Europeans are able to protect and effectively control our exterior borders," Seibert said.

On Thursday, Greece appealed to the EU to activate a civil protection mechanism that will provide material help and an emergency border intervention team, and



Greece's European Affairs Minister Nikos Xydakis speaks during an interview with the Associated Press in Athens, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. Greece has repeatedly asked for European Union help to deal with the massive influx of refugees this year, but the response so far has been far less than what was needed, Xydakis said Friday. (AP Photo/Thanassis Stavrakis)

reached an agreement with Frontex for the agency to assist in registrations at the country's northern border with Macedonia.

EU Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas said Friday that "we hope to have concrete, tangible progress on the ground" in Greece before an EU summit on Dec. 17, where migration will be on the agenda.

The refugee crisis has been compounded in Greece by a decision by several Balkan nations to stop allowing people from countries not at war to enter their territories. □

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South India rains ease; poor urban planning feeds misery

MUNEZA NAQVI

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The relentless rains that lashed southern India's Tamil Nadu state for three days eased Friday, but the misery of tens of thousands of people was far from over, with large parts of the main city still underwater along with the region's biggest airport.

As Chennai, the state cap-

ital, reeled from the heaviest rains in over a century, experts said the devastation was in large part due to the same breakneck and haphazard urban planning that has marked many of India's major cities.

It's a pattern that's been repeated for at least a decade. In 2005, India's commercial capital Mumbai came to a stand-

still after several days of monsoon rains. Last year, Srinagar in Indian Kashmir, saw massive devastation as flood waters swallowed a city where unchecked construction had blocked rainwater channels and eaten into wetlands.

India's main monsoon season runs from June through September, but for Chennai and the rest of India's southeastern

coast, the heaviest rainfall is from October to December — also called the re-treating monsoon.

This year's deluge — which experts linked to the El Nino weather pattern, when the waters of the Pacific Ocean get warmer than usual — caught Chennai, with a population of 9.6 million, completely unprepared.

One woman told NDTV

news channel that she was finally able to get on a rescue boat Friday, three days after the rains began to lash the city.

The government has set up 97 relief camps, which are currently providing food and shelter to an estimated 62,000 people.

Dozens of homes across Chennai remained submerged too despite the rain ebbing. □

China's Xi pledges \$60 billion to African development



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers his speech during the opening ceremony of the Johannesburg Summit for the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg Friday Dec. 4, 2015. (AP Photo)

LYNSEY CHUTEL

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP)

— China's president pledged \$60 billion to development in Africa on Friday, as part of what Chi-

nese and African leaders have called "win-win co-operation."

President Xi Jinping made the announcement to rousing applause from an audience that included South

Africa's President Jacob Zuma, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and African Union Commission Chairwoman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Speaking at the Forum on China Africa Cooperation in South Africa, Xi outlined 10 areas that will receive funding including infrastructure projects, aid for drought-stricken countries and thousands of scholarships for African students. The Chinese government will also cancel outstanding debts for Africa's least developed countries in the form of zero interest loans that mature at the end of 2015, he said.

Xi also promised to provide assistance to help upgrade African health care facilities, train hundreds of journalists and provide satellite reception in 10,000 African villages.

China has the world's largest foreign currency reserves at \$3.514 trillion. State owned banks have often looked to developing countries for investment opportunities.

The \$60 billion pledge is three times as much as the

package promised at the last China Africa cooperation summit in 2012, said economist Aubrey Hruby. With China's recent economic woes, the Washington D.C.-based economist was expecting a more modest fund.

Hruby added the package is likely to be distributed through numerous state-owned agencies and it will be difficult to track the funding's successes or failures.

"There's not a lot of transparency in how it's broken down," she said.

As with pledges from previous summits, the funding will be distributed over the next three years, she added.

At the last summit in Beijing, China pledged to provide a \$20 billion credit line to African countries for development projects and boosted the China Africa development fund by \$5 billion, as it has this year. □

Rural North Korea hunkers down for harsh winter season

ERIC TALMADGE

Associated Press

HYANGSAN COUNTY, North Korea (AP) — North

Koreans are hunkering down for a harsh winter that some fear could be made worse by a poor harvest following summer floods.

In rural areas like Hyangsan County, in North Pyongan Province, about 130 kilometers (80 miles) from Pyongyang, people are out each day on snow-covered roads pulling

cartloads of firewood and cabbage and stockpiling whatever else they can for the months ahead. Most have just finished preparing their kimchi — the pickled and spiced cabbage that is a staple of the Korean diet.

To get through the winter, many rural North Koreans will be using charcoal braziers or burning wood or corn husks for heat, which can lead to asphyxiation if homes shut tight against the sub-zero temperatures

are not ventilated properly.

They will also be stretching out their supply of kimchi, government rations and whatever they can grow from their own "kitchen gardens" — small plots of land that families are allowed to maintain to grow food for their own needs. If they are lucky enough to have a chicken, they may have an egg or two. In some regions they might have access to a very small amount of meat and fish.

The combination of the limited variety of foods that are available and the stresses on the body from enduring the frigid weather is a major hardship for most North Koreans.

But while it has the added burden of being bitterly cold, winter is generally not the toughest time of year as far as the food supply goes. North Korea's "lean season" is actually from March to August, when leftover supplies are depleted and the next har-

vest is still growing.

Conditions have also improved dramatically since the widespread famine in the 1990s, when a combination of bad weather, a dysfunctional distribution system and the fall of the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc benefactors led to a massive calamity euphemistically referred to here as the "Arduous March." North Korea is now closer to food self-sufficiency than it has been in decades. □



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Mexico: 3 highway crooks held on killing Australian tourists

CULIACAN, Mexico (AP) —

Three suspects have been detained in connection with the presumed killing of two Australian tourists who went missing last month, prosecutors in Mexico's Sinaloa state said Friday. State prosecutor Marco Antonio Higuera said the three men were robbing motorists on a stretch of highway leading south through Navolato, Sinaloa. He said two other suspected members of the robbery gang remained at large.

The three were arrested on low-level drug-dealing and weapons charges, but Higuera said he expects homicide charges to be filed against them soon.

"This is just a gang of five people who committed highway robberies. They don't have links to drug cartels," Higuera said.

One of them had previously been investigated for the killing of a man in a similar robbery, prosecutors said. The gang is alleged to have killed Adam Coleman and Dean Lucas after Coleman resisted the robbery just after midnight Nov. 21. The thieves allegedly shot the two Australians to death, then doused their van with gasoline and set it afire. Two charred bodies found inside the van the next day have not yet been positively identified. Tests are continuing. But the van's vehicle identification number matched one registered to Coleman in Canada.

Evidence presented at a news conference showed the arrested men had rifles, a shotgun, pistols, 124 small bags of methamphetamine and jackets with police logos on them. □

Argentina, Brazil to closely watch Venezuela election

MAURICIO SAVARESE

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) —

Argentina's president-elect Mauricio Macri said Friday that he and Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff will be "closely observing" Sunday's election in Venezuela.

Macri has made it clear that he's against the presence of the politically polarized Venezuela in the South American trade bloc Mercosur — principally because he says it has violated the group's democratic clause.

Macri is visiting Brazil on his first international trip after winning last month's vote. In a press conference in Brasilia, in which Rousseff didn't participate, Macri said that he and the embattled Rousseff are "hoping that the tension that Venezuela is living today will subside."

"What Mercosur will do (with Venezuela) is related to what happens on Sunday," he said.

Recent polls say that the opposition to leftist Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro leads by about 30 percentage points ahead of elections that could change control of the country's congress for the first time since 1998.

Shortly after winning in Argentina, Macri said that

he would pressure Mercosur to apply its democratic clause and suspend Ven-

called for closer commercial relations between the two neighbors that have

"was very calm" despite the beginning of impeachment proceedings



A supporter of the ruling party cries as she is overcome by emotion, during the closing campaign rally in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015. As Venezuelans get ready to vote on Dec. 6, in congressional elections, polls show the opposition coalition holding a 30 point lead, buoyed by voters defecting from the socialist party because of high crime, widespread shortages and triple-digit inflation.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

ezuela because of accusations of rights abuses there.

But Rousseff, a big Venezuela supporter, has demanded evidence that the government has violated democratic rules.

During his short meeting with Rousseff, Macri

been at odds over trade barriers.

"Both countries are suffering from a recession. We want to strengthen our trade relations," Macri said. "If Brazil does better, Argentina will do better, too."

Macri says that Rousseff

against her this week, noting that "she explained what was happening."

Later, the president-elect met businessmen in Sao Paulo and insisted that Brazil and Argentina need to cooperate more to overcome their economic crises. □

El Salvador: 295 suspected cases of dengue-like Zika

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) —

Public health authorities in El Salvador are seeing an increase in cases of Zika, a mosquito-borne, dengue-like virus that has been linked to malformations in newborn babies.

The assistant minister of health says authorities will increase protective prenatal monitoring and other measures.

Eduardo Espinoza said Friday that preventive measures to stop the spread of the disease are already

being taken, because such measures are the same for Zika and dengue.

Those measures include spraying and eliminating mosquito breeding grounds.

In late November, authorities confirmed three cases

of Zika in El Salvador, and after that about 295 suspected cases have been reported.

Scientists in Brazil have linked Zika infections to cases of babies being born with small heads, or microcephaly. □

Ecuador lawmakers vote to end presidential term limit

GONZALO SOLANO

Associated Press

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) —

The National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment Thursday to lift Ecuador's presidential term limits as violent street protests escalated against what many demonstrators deemed a power grab by President Rafael Correa. Part of a package of

amendments, the measure will permit the leftist Correa to run for the office indefinitely beginning in 2021. His current term ends in 2017 and he has said he does not intend to run at that time.

Analysts have called Correa's decision a shrewd political move considering Ecuador's current economic woes.

Outside the cordoned-off assembly, protesters who had been blocking major intersections with burning tires grew in number. Armed with sticks and rocks, some battled riot police, who responded with tear gas and batons. There were no official numbers on injuries, but local media reported some police and protesters had been

bloodied. Street clashes were also reported in other cities. Popular for generous social spending since first taking office in 2007, Correa has in recent months been forced to drastically cut back on spending and impose new taxes after world prices for the country's oil plunged. Since June, Correa has

faced mounting demonstrations by a wide spectrum of forces, including labor unions, indigenous groups and the traditional conservative opposition. Correa's Alianza Pais party holds a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly and the package of constitutional changes won easily on a 100-8 vote in the 137-seat chamber. □

Baton and sash at center of presidential spat in Argentina

PETER PRENGAMAN

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP) — A growing spat between Argentina's outgoing president and president elect over inauguration day logistics took a strange turn on Friday, with the silversmith responsible for crafting a ceremonial baton saying an assistant was threatened by possible police action.

The brouhaha, which has many Argentines shaking their heads, deepened on the same day that President-elect Mauricio Macri visited neighboring Brazil, his first head-of-state visit since being elected Nov. 22. Macri wants to receive the presidential baton and sash from outgoing President Cristina Fernandez in the government house, or Casa Rosada, during the Dec. 10 inauguration. However, Fernandez administration officials insist the transfer will happen in



Argentina's President-elect Mauricio Macri walks in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. A growing spat between Argentina's outgoing president and Macri over inauguration day logistics took a strange turn on Friday.

(AP Photo/Andre Penner)

Congress. News channels, which covered the disagreement all day, briefly broke in to show Macri meeting with Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. Macri was asked by reporters in Brasilia about the tiff. He responded that thankfully Rousseff didn't bring it up, but otherwise didn't com-

ment. "Many of us look at this and think, 'How embarrassing,'" said Martin Bohmer, former dean of the law school at the University of Buenos Aires. "It's amazing that we are having so much trouble transferring power. The very active social media sites in the South American nation went wild on Friday after silversmith Juan Carlos Pal-

larols shared his story with several news organizations. The respected craftsman has made every presidential baton since the country's return to democracy in 1983. He said Macri officials this week asked him not to turn the baton over to the current administration. But the other side also applied pressure: Pallarols said an assistant received a threatening call from a Fernandez official, saying police would intervene if the baton wasn't finished and turned over soon.

"It was an unpleasant situation," said Pallarols, who added that another official later called him to apologize. On Twitter, a clip from popular cartoon produced by a state television channel was making the rounds. In one episode, "Zamba," the protagonist, is visiting the Casa Rosada. A guide tells him it's "where the presidential sash and baton are handed over." The constitution establishes that the incoming presi-

dent's swearing in ceremony take place in Congress, but does not specify where things like batons or sashes should be handed over. While Fernandez received the baton and sash in Congress, other new presidents have received them at the Casa Rosada.

"The president is within her rights," said Cabinet chief Anibal Fernandez. "The articles will be in Congress. If Macri doesn't want to receive them there, then he shouldn't receive them." Fernandez, a populist leader who publicly criticizes her opponents, has dominated the political landscape the last 12 years: initially as first lady during the administration of late husband Nestor Kirchner, and the last eight as president herself. News columnists and social media pundits have speculated that Macri will refuse to bow to Fernandez, and will simply put on his own presidential sash or ask a top official in his administration to do it. □



St. Kitts halts Syrians from citizenship sales

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts (AP)

— The country of St. Kitts and Nevis has closed its citizenship-by-investment program to Syrians until further vetting processes can be put in place, a legal advisory firm said Friday. A statement from London-based CS Global Partners said the tiny Caribbean nation made the decision because of reports of numerous counterfeit Syrian passports in the international black market. It said Prime Minister Timo-

thy Harris announced the suspension of nationals from war-ravaged Syria from his country's citizenship-by-investment program at a Thursday reception in Washington. St. Kitts closed its program to Iranians several years ago after Iranian students stormed the British Embassy in Tehran. "Investor visa" or citizenship programs are offered by many nations, including the U.S. and Britain. But the Caribbean countries of St. Kitts, Domi-

nica and Grenada offer a quick path to citizenship at a relatively low cost. The whole process, including background checks, can take as little as 90 days in St. Kitts. There's no need to ever live on the islands. A foreigner can qualify for citizenship in St. Kitts with a \$250,000 donation to a fund for retired sugar workers or with a minimum real estate investment of \$400,000. The minimum contribution in Dominica is \$100,000. □



The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba Recognized At 2015 Shoco Awards



PALM BEACH - The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is proud to announce that Ms. Alta-gracia Lampe was awarded "Manager of the Year" during the 2015 Aruba Shoco Awards held recently on the island. In addition to Ms. Lampe, three additional Ladies and Gentle-

man from The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba were nominated for awards including Ms. Lucia Franken – Supervisor of the Year, Carlos Irausquin – One Happy Island Ambassador, and Elba Fajardo – Employee of the Year. The Shoco Awards are hosted annually by the



Aruba Tourism Authority and Hotel Association, honoring individuals within the hospitality industry on the island. Honorees are recognized for their unique service excellence qualities, hospitality experience and outstanding contributions to the success of Aruba's tourism industry.

"We are thrilled that a number of our ladies and gentleman were recognized by the Aruba Tourism Authority and Hotel Association during the recent Shoco Awards," said Corey Guest, director of Human Resources for The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba. "It is an honor for our team to be recognized for the exceptional quality of service which we remain so committed to providing as Aruba continues to welcome more and more visitors from around the world."

The Shoco is Aruba's local indigenous bird and island treasure, representing creativity, wisdom, focus and vision. Award categories for the annual event include: Employee of the Year; Supervisor of the Year; Manager of the Year; Young Tourism Professional of the Year; Lifetime Achievement award; Tour Guide of the Year and One Happy Island Ambassador. □





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Online tool will enhance visitor ease to island: ATA Announces Digital Embarkation and Disembarkation Card



ORANJESTAD (PRNews-wire) Effective December 1, 2015, Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA), Aruba Immigration Services (IASA) and Gamma will introduce a new service to the island's visitors. As a country that continually strives for the pursuit of innovation and modernization in guest services, Aruba's new service allows guests the option of

digitally filling out the required Embarkation and Disembarkation card (ED-card) before ever stepping foot on the popular Caribbean island. Presently, the ED-card is given to travelers while still onboard their flight. With the introduction of the new online version, visitors will be able to go to www.edcardaruba.aw as soon as

they book their flights to fill out the digital ED-card as a convenient and green alternative, contributing to Aruba's commitment to sustainable action. Families, couples and friends heading to Aruba along with travel industry leaders will appreciate the digital ED-card for offering visitors the opportunity to easily complete the information requirements before embarking on their journey, as well as expediting the airport flow once they arrive on-island. Aruba's "Happy Returners"—travelers who have been to Aruba at least once before or continue to return, year after year—will appreciate that they only



have to update their digital ED-card with new travel dates and trip details, as the system will save their basic information for future use. All visitors to Aruba are required to fill out an ED-card, although the traditional paper card will still be available for visitors who prefer this. Guests can fill out their digital ED-card as soon as they have booked their flights and up to 48 hours before departing to Aruba. After 48 hours have passed, all visitors must fill out the paper ED-card upon arrival. "ATA and IASA are thrilled to be industry leaders with this time saving digital tool. Aruba's tourism partners and local people are all committed to the continued enhancement of our One happy island," said Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes, CEO of ATA. "Upon landing with their ED-card already completed, visitors will be further delighted to discover the Aruba's Happy Flow program, designed to streamline and expedite the passenger process with enhanced digital airport checkpoints." Once more, Aruba has been differentiated from other destinations and ATA from other Destination Marketing and Management Organizations (DMMOs) for this innovative focus on

meeting the modern traveler's needs and exceeding expectations. ATA has also recently launched the Happiness Builder, a game-changing digital tool that allows visitors to begin their vacations early and enjoy the trip planning process almost as much as their time on island. A content-rich planning experience where travelers can explore aruba.com/shortcuts for nearly 100 videos featuring adventure, relaxation, romance and cultural activities in Aruba, the Happiness Builder creates a personal 'Shortcut to Happiness' video itinerary made from six chosen clips with the addition of happy music and a personalized message which can then be shared with friends and loved ones via email and social media. As Aruba continues to evolve from both a product and marketing perspective, new and innovative tools like digital the ED-card and the Happiness Builder remain crucial to Aruba's success as one of the most popular tourist destinations. Fill out your own ED-card online at www.edcardaruba.aw. For more information on the One happy island, visit www.aruba.com. Engage with Aruba via social media at www.facebook.com/ArubaFans or @Aruba on Twitter. □

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Riu Palace Aruba's Executive Chef Valerio Rodriguez Mentors 11 Culinary Arts Students

PALM BEACH - During the month of November the Riu Palace Aruba welcomed 11 EPB students of the Hospitality & Tourism sector to serve as interns in the resort's kitchen. The students worked closely with Executive Chef Valerio Rodriguez and his culinary team to complete the course of their internship, which is required by their school before graduating.

EPB's Hospitality & Tourism unit faced the challenge of placing 90 students among several different kitchens on the island. Executive Chef Valerio Rodriguez agreed to mentor 11 students, which was the highest number of students placed in any other kitchen on the island.

"We are so grateful to you and your organization," says an Internship Coordinator at the EPB unit of Hospitality & Tourism. "Riu Palace Aruba's commitment, knowledge and experience continue to help shape the future professionals of the industry," he added.

General Manager Richard Velasco was astonished by each of the student's competence when handling and preparing the food for the resort's guests. The Riu Palace Aruba is honored to have had the privilege, and will continue to mentor future professionals of the food and beverage industry. □



ATA Honors Loyal Guests at Aruba Marriott Surf Club

PALM BEACH - Recently at the Marriott Surf Club, Aruba vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for 10 and 20 consecutive years.

Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Visitor certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Goodwill Ambassador certificate.

The honoring was hosted by Jonathan Boekhoudt of the Aruba Tourism Authority at the Marriott Surf Club, which they call their 'home away from home.'

The following guests were honored as Distinguished Visitors for the Island of Aruba after coming for more than 10 consecutive years were Ms. Lisa Zinck, Ms. Julie Joyce, Mr. Eugene and



Mrs. Patricia Lyall, Mr. Denis and Mrs. Stacie McCarty, Mr. Ronald and Mrs. Cyndi

Savicke, and Mr. Michael and Mrs. Leslie Gruber. Guests who were honored

as Goodwill Ambassadors for the Island of Aruba after coming for more than

20 consecutive years were Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Diane Zinck. □

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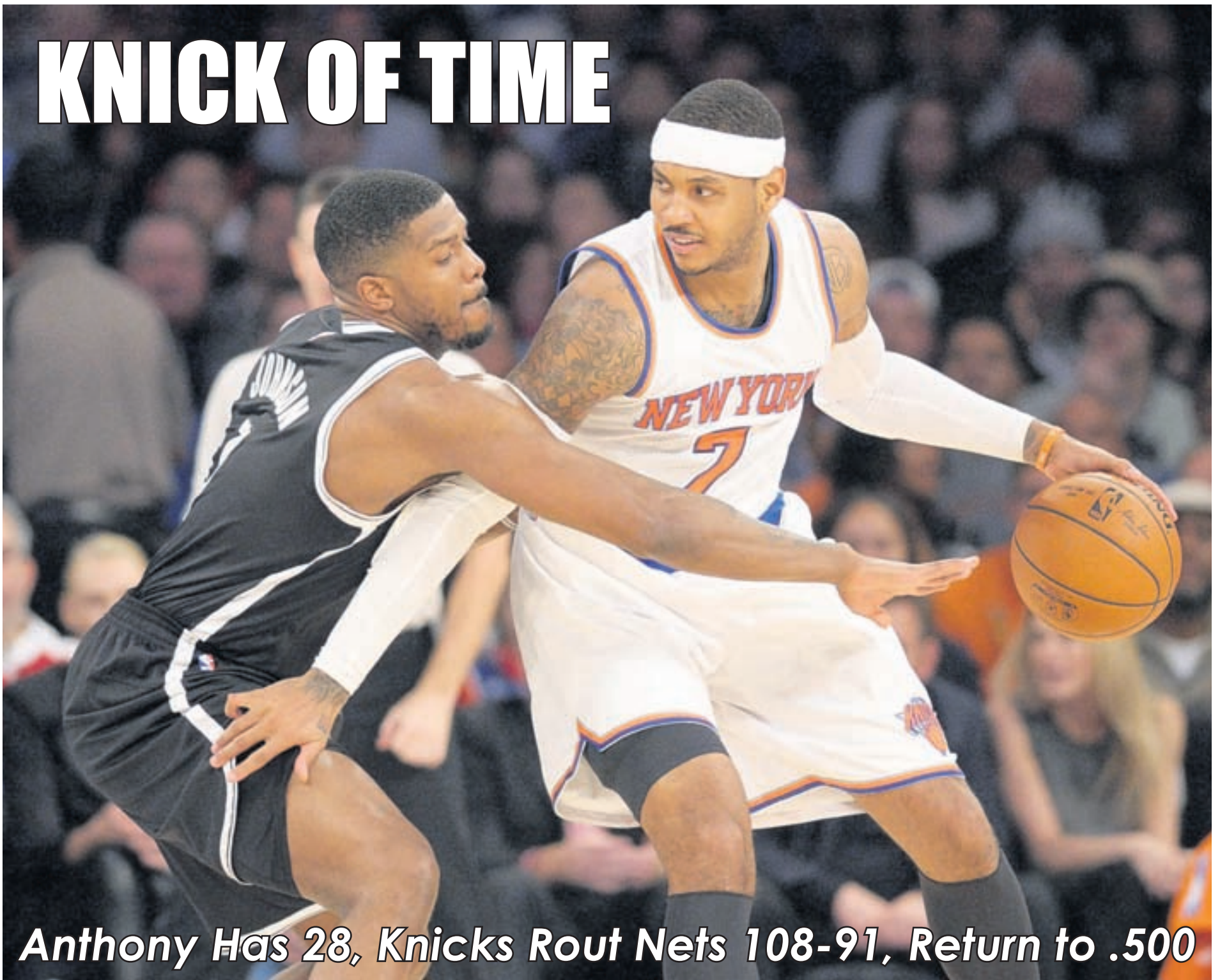
extended menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 4-course menu for just \$25.95 **Charter deep sea fishing rates:** \$400 - 1/2 day • \$760 - full day. Rates per boat Max. 6 people. **Driftwood Restaurant** Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant; Klipstraat #12, Downtown Oranjestad. Tel: (297) 583 2515 www.driftwoodaruba.com Open hours: every day, from 5pm till 10:30pm. Sunday Closed.

College Football Preview: Clemson Faces North Carolina In Epic Battle

Page 18



KNICK OF TIME



Anthony Has 28, Knicks Rout Nets 108-91, Return to .500

New York Knicks forward Carmelo Anthony, right, protects the ball as Brooklyn Nets forward Joe Johnson reaches in during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, at Madison Square Garden in New York. The Knicks beat the Nets 108-91.

(AP Photo/Bill Kostroun)

NEW YORK (AP) -- Carmelo Anthony scored 28 points, Kristaps Porzingis had 19 and the New York Knicks beat the Brooklyn Nets 108-91 on Friday night to get back to .500.

Arron Afflalo added 18 points for the Knicks (10-10), who dominated lowly Philadelphia and Brooklyn in their last two games after a four-game losing streak.

They reclaimed city bragging rights with ease, leading by as much as 31 points. Brook Lopez scored 21 points, and Thaddeus Young had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Nets. They had won two in a row and have a lot to fix before they host the unbeaten Golden State Warriors on Sunday.

Lopez beat twin brother

Robin to take the opening tip, and it was soon clear that was all the Nets would be winning.

The Knicks blitzed them with a season-best 42 points in the first quarter, led 65-42 at halftime and opened their first lead of 30 or more since the 2013-14 season in the third period.

The Nets had allowed 91 points or fewer in three

straight games, but the Knicks already surpassed that with a 92-67 cushion heading to the fourth quarter. Brooklyn fell to 1-11 on the road.

The Nets swept the series last season for the first since winning all four games in 2006-07.

They lost forward Joe Johnson in the fourth quarter when was called for a fla-

grant foul and ejected for elbowing Jose Calderon in the face.

Porzingis finished with 10 rebounds for his 10th double-double.

He was the Eastern Conference rookie of the month for October/November, the first Knicks player to win that award since Landry Fields in December 2010. □

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ACC Championship Preview:

Clemson Tigers face North Carolina Tar Heels in epic battle

Associated Press

(AP) Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables has spent a lot of time watching No. 8 North Carolina score quickly. And he's sharing it with players in film sessions that get quite repetitive.

"It's 'How you like this play? How about this play? How about that score?'" Venables said Tuesday. "First play of the Duke game, it's all jacked up, in-state rivalry, then they run the flea flicker. Touchdown, 80 yards."

Venables knows the difficult challenge ahead for No. 1 Clemson (12-0) in slowing down the Tar Heels (11-1) in the ACC championship game Saturday night.

North Carolina is 16th nationally in yards gained at 495.7 a game. More impressive, in Venables' view, is how fast the Tar Heels can strike.

"There's a lot of explosive play-makers" on UNC's offense, Venables said.

But Venables isn't without options; Clemson has a few play-makers on defense, too. Defensive end Shaq Lawson leads the country in tackles for loss. Linebacker B.J. Goodson and Ben Boulware have combined for 234 tackles, 22 of those behind the line of scrimmage. No one at Clemson was completely sure how long it would take this year's defense to come together. The Tigers lost eight starters off last season's No. 1 ranked unit, including first-round NFL draft picks in end Vic Beasley and linebacker Stephone Anthony.



In this Nov. 14, 2015, photo, Clemson's Jordan Leggett, left, dives for a loose ball that he fumbled with several Syracuse players in the first quarter of an NCAA college football game in Syracuse, N.Y. Syracuse recovered the fumble. Turnovers is an area of concern the top-ranked Tigers need to shore up before facing No. 8 North Carolina for the ACC championship Saturday night.

(AP Photo/Nick Lisi)

If that wasn't enough, linebacker Korrin Wiggins hurt his knee in camp and starting defensive tackle D.J. Reader took an extended leave of absence from the team for personal reasons in late August.

Despite all that, Clemson ended the regular season seventh in the FBS, allowing 288 yards a game.

"I thought we had a chance to be solid," Venables said. "But probably not to the same level" as 2014.

They'll need to approach it to corral the Tar Heels, who've scored 38 or more points in eight of their 12 games.

They scored 66 points against the Blue Devils and had 59 a week later against Miami on the way to the ACC's Coastal Divi-

sion crown.

Venables called North Carolina the best offense Clemson's faced all season, including Notre Dame and Florida State. If the Tigers don't bring their best effort, the perfect season and trip to the College Football Playoff could easily slip away.

North Carolina coach Larry Fedora is equally awed by Clemson's defense.

"This is best football team we've have faced," he said. "I mean, they're the No. 1 team in the country. And they've been that way for how many weeks? So they're really good."

That defense, though, has gone through a late-season slide.

In the first seven games, only the Fighting Irish and Georgia Tech scored 20 or

more points against the Tigers. Clemson has given up an average of 25 points in its past five contests.

Three-win South Carolina notched its highest point total of the season in a 37-32 loss to the Tigers last week - most of it coming after the Tigers had taken a 28-10 lead.

Lawson said the Tigers have been prepping for their league title game all season and will be ready to go at North Carolina.

The Tar Heels' worst offensive showing was their first game, an inexplicable 17-13 loss to the Gamecocks at the title game site, Bank of America Stadium.

"Ever since then they've been on fire," Lawson said. But Clemson's defense has been practicing all season, Lawson said, against

its own high-flying attack, which leads the ACC in total yards and can be as quick-strike as the Tar Heels. "We're used to going against their offense because that's what our offense does against us when we're going to practice every week," he said. "So it's not a big challenge for us. We've just got to be ready to play."

A resurgent North Carolina defense adds to the challenge, though the Tar Heels have had a few hiccups in recent weeks. Some of those, however, can be chalked up to the team being in an unusual position: playing entire second halves against ACC opponents in what amounted to garbage time with the outcome long since decided by the Tar Heels' overwhelming starts.

UNC led 38-10 by halftime of the 66-31 win over the Blue Devils, was up 31-0 at halftime and 45-0 in the third quarter of the 59-21 victory over the Hurricanes and jumped to a 35-7 lead in the first quarter of Saturday's 45-34 win at North Carolina State. The Tar Heels gave up 17.0 points per game through the first eight.

"I really do think we gave up too many points this past week, gave up too many yards," linebacker Shakeel Rashad said. "And we have to go back and fix that."

But at the same time, it's not like we're losing confidence over it, because everything that we're messing up is very fixable." □

No. 2 Alabama's SEC dominance shows no signs of letting up



Alabama running back Derrick Henry (2) runs the ball during the second half of an NCAA college football game, Saturday, Nov. 28, 2015, in Auburn, Ala. Heading into another appearance in the SEC championship game, there's no indication that anyone is close to knocking off Nick Saban's behemoth from Tuscaloosa: Certainly not Florida, which will face the No. 2 Crimson Tide on Saturday.

(AP Photo/Butch Dill)

PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) -- Alabama has set the bar high for the rest of the Southeastern Conference. Heading into another appearance in the SEC championship game, there's no indication that anyone is close to knocking off Nick Saban's behemoth from Tuscaloosa. Certainly not Florida, which will face the No. 2 Crimson Tide on Saturday.

Despite a resurgent season under new coach Jim McElwain, the offensively challenged Gators are a massive 18-point underdog against Alabama (11-1, No. 2 CFP), which is one victory away from a second straight trip to the College Football Playoff. "Not real excited about playing these creatures," McElwain joked Friday. In his ninth season as the Tide's coach, Saban has already won three na-

tional titles. Discounting a rebuilding season when he took over a then-floundering program in 2007, his teams have posted an astonishing record (95-12), earned a spot in five SEC championship games, and been a serious player in every national race except one (in 2010, when the Tide "slumped" to 10-3).

Not that there seems to be any joy in the ride. Saban was in an especially grumpy mood Friday, barely cracking a smile as he coldly, methodically discussed what it takes to stay on top, year after year after year.

"It's not easy at all," he said. "You have to have the right psychological disposition to be able to sustain all those ups and downs and look at every one of those challenges as a test, not a sign of what's going to happen. It's a test of how you respond to it, how you react to it, and how you try to take advantage of it, good or bad. That's the only way you have a chance."

Does No. 18 Florida (10-2, No. 18 CFP) have any chance?

The Gators' offensive woes were especially glaring as they struggled to beat Florida Atlantic in overtime and lost 27-2 at home to Florida State, with only a safety preventing Florida's first shutout loss since 1988. But McElwain isn't about to shy away from the challenge of going against his former boss, having at least restored some of Florida's former glory after the Will Muschamp era.

The Gators are playing in the SEC championship game for the first time since 2009.

"It's been so much fun

seeing the development of the program, of our players, of the people around the program," said McElwain, who spent four years as Saban's offensive coordinator. "When you sit back and reflect a little bit, we've come a long ways. But how far we're going to go is probably the most exciting part of it."

Alabama is already there, though Saban has gone to great lengths to make sure

no one is looking ahead to the playoff. He called this game "a set up," insisting that Florida is the best team the Tide has faced all season.

"We know if we don't win this game, we can't do anything else further in the season," tight end O.J. Howard said, taking his coach at his word. "We've got to take it one step at a time, so we're just focused on this game." □

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Hail, Hail!

Packers beat Lions 27-23 on Rodgers-to-Rodgers Hail Mary

LARRY LAGE

AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Aaron Rodgers threw a 61-yard touchdown pass to Richard Rodgers with no time left to give the Green Bay Packers a 27-23 victory over the Detroit Lions on Thursday.

The Packers got the untimed down after Detroit defensive end Devin Taylor was called for grabbing Aaron Rodgers' facemask on a tackle on what would've been the last play.

The Packers (8-4) had lost four of five. The Lions (4-8) had won three straight and blew a chance to sweep the season series for the first time since 1991.

Matthew Stafford connected with Calvin Johnson on his second touchdown pass of the first quar-



Green Bay Packers tight end Richard Rodgers (82) reaches to catch the game winning pass on the last play of an NFL football game against the Detroit Lions, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015, in Detroit. The Packers defeated the Lions 27-23.

(AP Photo/Duane Burleson)

ter to help Detroit build a 20-point lead that it couldn't keep.

Aaron Rodgers scored on a 17-yard run with 3:04 left, pulling the Packers within two points.

Stafford connected with TJ Jones to convert a third-and-12 from the Detroit 18 after Green Bay called its final timeout with 2:54 to go. The Lions needed one more first down to seal the victory, but Green Bay forced them to punt and got the ball back on the 21 with 23 seconds left.

Following two incompletions, including one in which Detroit appeared to get away with pass interference, Aaron Rodgers threw a pass to James Jones and the ball was lateraled twice, leaving the quarterback with the ball and no one behind

him to pitch to keep the play alive.

But Taylor grabbed Aaron Rodgers' facemask, giving the Packers another play. Aaron Rodgers scrambled long enough to give his receivers time to sprint to the end zone and got to the outside. The quarterback threw the ball, perhaps as high and far as he could, and his tight end found a way to get to it in front of a slew of players from both teams and leaped for the catch.

Aaron Rodgers finished 24 of 36 for 289 yards with two touchdowns.

Stafford was 23 of 35 for 220 yards and two scores. Detroit went ahead 17-0 after its first three drives and capped the opening possession of the third quarter with a field goal to go ahead 20-0. □

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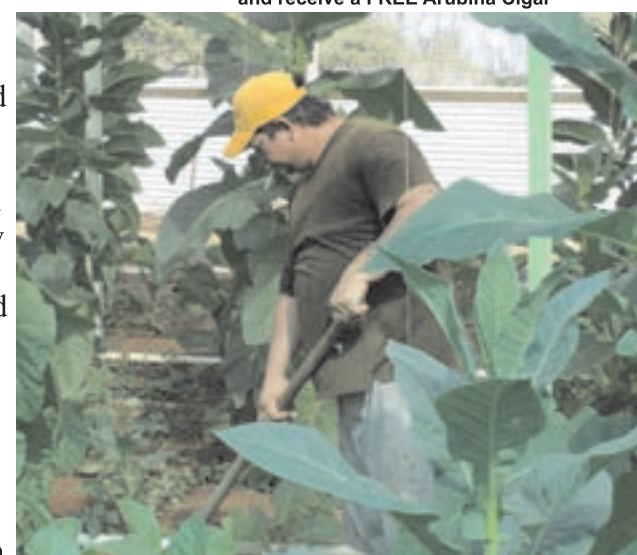
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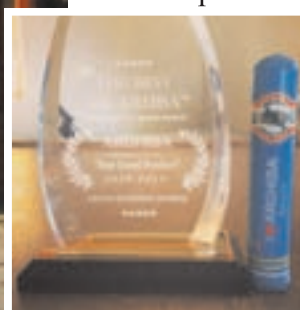
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers

Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the RIO Hotel, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive by the box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also



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AP: Brandt Jobe wins Champions Tour Q-school

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)

— Brandt Jobe won the Champions Tour qualifying tournament Friday to earn one of five fully exempt spots next year, closing with a 2-under 69 for a one-stroke victory.

Jobe, a six-time winner on the Japan Golf Tour, had an 18-under 266 total on TPC Scottsdale's Champions Course.

"I actually played pretty good today, but I just didn't make many putts," Jobe said. "I thought I was still in pretty good shape at the turn, but made bogey at No. 10 from the middle of the fairway with a 5-iron in my hand for my second shot. Luckily, I regrouped and hit quality shots coming in. I did just a good enough job today and now I'm really looking forward to next year. It's been awhile since I've been able to plan a schedule."

Tom Byrum, Willie Wood and Jose Coceres tied for second, and Mike Grob was another stroke back to take the last fully exempt spot.

The next seven players — John Riegger, Gibby Gilbert III, Jean-Francois Remesy, Stan Utley, 1996 U.S. Open champion Steve Jones, Chien Soon Lu and Miguel Angel Martin — are conditionally exempt. The rest of top 30 finishers and ties are eligible to compete for spots in open qualifiers. Byrum shot a 63.

"I just went out today and tried to make as many birdies as I could," Byrum said. "I got it going and had some good swing thoughts today. I had putt-ed well all week, so I knew if I could give myself some better scoring opportunities on the greens, I'd have a chance. It was nice to put this kind of a round together."

Grob made a key birdie at the 17th, getting up-and-down from underneath a tree left of the green. On his knees to hit his third shot, Grob chipped within 3 feet of the hole and made the putt to move in front of Riegger. □

NFL Preview: Panthers take winning run to Big Easy

BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

It's difficult to remember the last time the Carolina Panthers lost an NFL regular-season game.

It wasn't this season. They are the lone unbeaten team after New England went down at Denver last weekend. The Panthers, at 11-0, have a realistic shot

division with a victory. New Orleans has dropped three in a row and can't stop anyone.

The way these teams have played lately, their game looks like a mismatch. But the division rivals often play one another close, as they did in Week 3, when the Saints had a chance to win until Panthers cornerback

Greg Ellis made a gressive football, very physical football. They (defense) are the main reason why they are 11-0," Saints tight end Benjamin Watson says. "Their defensive line does a good job of creating pressure, they move around a lot. Their linebackers wreak havoc."

That havoc has translated to the offense, too. Cam

anything that is special. It is just guys finding a way to win football games."

Perhaps the feature match of Week 13 is Seattle at Minnesota. The Seahawks finally have a winning record and think they can stage a surge similar to last season's, which landed them in the Super Bowl. Seattle's offense has begun to crank up with Thomas Rawls at running back instead of the injured Marshawn Lynch, and Doug Baldwin emerging as a No. 1 receiver. But tight end Jimmy Graham is done after hurting his right knee in last week's victory over Pittsburgh, when Russell Wilson threw for a career-best five touchdowns.

"We're not going to change," coach Pete Carroll said of losing Graham. "We didn't really change when Jimmy got here. We just wanted to get the football there." Minnesota is for real, rebounding from a home loss to Green Bay with a solid win at Atlanta. Adrian Peterson once more is the league's best runner, and the defense is formidable. New England remains formidable despite its injury woes, and a home victory against the reeling Philadelphia Eagles, combined with a New York Jets loss, finishes off the AFC East race. Of most interest here could be who Tom Brady targets with his throws: Danny Amendola could be back, but tight end Rob Gronkowski is likely to miss the game with a bruised knee. □



Washington Redskins' Kirk Cousins, right, fumbles the ball as he is hit by Carolina Panthers' Bene Benwikere, left, in the second half of an NFL football game in Charlotte, N.C. The Panthers recovered the ball. As the lone remaining unbeaten team, the Carolina Panthers have made believers across the NFL. One major reason for their success as they head to New Orleans is their skill at protecting and taking away the football.

(AP Photo/Mike McCann)

at repeating the Patriots' achievement of 2007, winning all 16 regular-season outings. When they visit the New Orleans Saints on Sunday — where their 15-game winning string began last season — the Panthers can clinch the NFC South

Josh Norman's leaping, twisting interception in the end zone late in the fourth quarter preserved Carolina's 27-22 triumph.

The Panthers are plus-16 in turnover margin and have 28 take-aways.

"They're playing very ag-

Newton running and throwing, Greg Olsen catching, Jonathan Stewart rushing — it's been a potent combination lately.

"It's just guys are making plays when their numbers are called," Newton says. "There is no magic dust or

Simin Feng leads LPGA Tour Qualifying Tournament

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— China's Simin Feng eagled the par-5 18th hole Friday to take a two-stroke lead after the third round of the LPGA Tour Qualifying Tournament. The 20-year-old Feng shot a 3-under 69 on LPGA International's Jones Course to reach 12-under 204.

The top 20 finishers Sunday will earn full LPGA Tour cards, and Nos. 21-45 and ties will receive conditional status. "It's a great feeling to play good early," Feng

said. "It feels great to be in the lead but there's still two more days to go and many more holes to come so I just have to keep going."

Feng played on season at Vanderbilt before turning professional last year. She tied for sixth in the event last season to earn an LPGA Tour card.

"I kind of tried to tweak my practice a little bit before this tournament," Feng said. "I decided to focus on my wedge game and the scoring part of the game,

which has really helped me here. I've been able to save some shots and make some birdies on par 5s."

Cydney Clanton was second after a 69 on the Jones Course. "To get out to a good start is always nice," Clanton said. "The weekend is just a grind. You just have to shoot low numbers. You have to just keep going." South Korea's Julie Yang was another stroke back after a 72 on the Hills Course. Grace Na and Thailand's Budsabakorn Su-

kapan were tied for fifth at 8 under. The 18-year-old Sukapan also eagled the final hole on the Jones Course for a 67. Na had a 69, also on the Jones Course.

"Everything was working really well today," Sukapan said. "I made some long putts and some par saves and my approach shots were good too."

Cheyenne Woods, Tiger Woods' niece, had a 72 on the Jones Course to drop from a tie for ninth into a tie for 16th at 4 under. □

Real Madrid disqualified from cup over ineligible player

HAROLD HECKLE
Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Real Madrid was disqualified from the Copa del Rey after fielding an ineligible player in its opening round, a Spanish soccer federation statement said Friday. The statement said Madrid had fielded an "improper lineup" in a 3-1 first-leg win over Cadiz on Wednesday and that the two-match series was settled "in favor of Cadiz."

Madrid disputed the facts laid out in the federation's findings and in a statement released late Friday said it would present an "appropriate appeal." Madrid coach Rafa Benitez included Denis Cheryshev in his starting lineup, despite the Russian carrying a one-match suspension in the competition for an accumulation of yellow cards last season, when he played for Villarreal on loan from Madrid.

Cheryshev scored the opening goal before being substituted after halftime when Madrid realized its mistake. Madrid was also fined 6,000 euros (\$6,518). Club president Florentino Perez said he would explore "every avenue" to try and restore Madrid to the competition. The case is another embarrassment for both the club and Benitez, who was already under pressure

following a demoralizing 4-0 home loss to archrival Barcelona in the league. In his ruling, competition judge Francisco Rubio said Cheryshev had been told of his suspension in person, that the suspension had been published by the federation, and that was all that was required. In its statement, Madrid said the federation had not notified Cheryshev in person, something it said was "the only way the

sanction could become effective." However, the federation's ruling said, "there is no doubt that the player was notified in person and that the imposition of a one-match suspension derived from an accumulation of yellow cards was published." Cadiz said in a statement that it "could only regret what had happened," but said it was happy to abide by the judgment. □

Ibrahimovic becomes PSG's top league scorer in Nice win



PSG's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, right, challenges for the ball with Nice's Maxime Lemarchand, during the French League One soccer match between Nice and Paris Saint Germain, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, in Nice stadium, southeastern France.

JEROME PUGMIRE
AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Star striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic set another Paris Saint-Germain record Friday, scoring twice in a 3-0 win at Nice to become the club's outright all-time leading league scorer. The 34-year-old Swede is

already PSG's all-time leading scorer with 119 goals in all competitions, but his two goals took him to 87 in the league — surpassing the record of 85 he shared with Mustapha Dahleb. "We knew he would get that record, it was just a matter of when," PSG coach Laurent Blanc said.

(AP Photo/Lionel Cironneau)

"The lad scores an enormous amount of goals and he hasn't finished scoring yet." But Blanc was evasive when asked if he thinks Ibrahimovic, whose contract runs out in June, will play for PSG next season. "He has been, he is and he may still be vital to PSG's

project," Blanc said. Ibrahimovic is also the league's top scorer this season with 12 and best passer with six assists. Led by the trickery of winger Hatem Ben Arfa, Nice started brightly but faded after Cavani's 35th-minute tap-in, set up by Ibrahimovic from the left. Swedish midfielder Niklas Hult was sent off seven minutes later for fouling Ibrahimovic, who scored the resulting penalty. PSG leads second-place Caen by 16 points ahead of this weekend's games. Nice had PSG on the back foot early on, using Ben Arfa's skills through the middle and stretching the full-backs. With Nice's vocal crowd whipping up a hostile atmosphere, referee Antony Gautier warned PSG left back Layvin Kurzawa — who used to play for Nice's local rival Monaco — not to respond after being goaded by fans. PSG's first chance fell to Ibrahimovic, who got the better of defender Mathieu Bodmer on the edge of the penalty area but his shot was saved by goalkeeper

Yoan Cardinale. After Nice midfielder Jean Michael Seri shot straight at goalie Kevin Trapp, Ben Arfa mesmerized PSG midfielder Benjamin Stambouli with a brilliant change of direction, skipped past two players and curled a shot just over from 20 yards. PSG opened the scoring when Ibrahimovic flicked a pass up to midfielder Blaise Matuidi, who headed it back and Ibrahimovic set up Cavani for his ninth league goal of the campaign. After Bodmer headed Ben Arfa's free kick straight at Trapp, PSG struck again. Ibrahimovic latched onto Cavan's pass from the left and looked certain to score before Hult tugged him back. Ibrahimovic confidently beat Cardinale from the spot. PSG coasted through the second half, with Ibrahimovic, Angel di Maria and Thiago Motta missing good chances. The pressure finally told in the 61st when Di Maria picked out Ibrahimovic on the right and he drilled a low shot inside the near post. □

Dybala shines again as Juventus wins 2-0 at Lazio in Serie A

ROME (AP) — Paulo Dybala scored a stunning goal as well as setting up the opener to propel Juventus to a 2-0 win at Lazio on Friday as Massimiliano Allegri's team continues to push its way up the Serie A table. Dybala had forced Lazio defender Santiago Gentiletti into an early own goal before coming up with a moment of magic shortly

after the half hour. The Argentine controlled Mario Mandzukic's pass, flicked it up and volleyed it into the bottom corner. Dybala has played a part in 10 of Juventus' goals this season — scoring seven and assisting a further three. It was Juventus' fifth successive league win and moved the four-time de-

fending champion level on points with fourth-placed Roma as it recovers from a woeful start to the season. Roma visits Torino on Saturday. Juventus is also through to the knockout stages of the Champions League and can secure top spot in its group next week. "It's a positive period, but we have to stay aware and

continue this trend," Allegri said. "Dybala had a good game and scored a great goal. He has important technical skills, he is growing in that role. "But Mandzukic also did well, sacrificing himself a lot, like all the others, including the substitutes. I have to also mention (Kwadwo) Asamoah: he deserved a night of this sort after being

out for a long time." It was Asamoah's first start of the campaign after missing most of last season with knee problems. "Now there are important matches awaiting us and everyone will be useful," added Allegri. "So we have to remain united and positive. We have to think about ourselves, without looking at the others." □

TEC Toys:

PicoBrew expedites some home-brew hassles for a price

RYAN NAKASHIMA

AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — I've been brewing beer in my kitchen and garage for a couple years, so I know how time-consuming and messy it gets. I had high hopes for a system that promises to eradicate those hassles.

PicoBrew offers that system in two parts, sold separately. The Zymatic aims to simplify brewing by circulating water through grains and hops at just the right temperature and time. KegSmarts is a refrigerator and dispenser meant to take you the rest of the way from grain to glass.

But the system doesn't automate everything. You'll still be hooking and unhooking hoses, lifting 20 pounds or more of liquids and sticking your arm down a keg to wash it with a sponge. This is no coffee maker or bread-making machine, both of which give you the end product in the same machine you put in the ingredients with minimal fuss.

The improvements PicoBrew does offer, such as precision during the boil, will set you back roughly ten times what a barebones homebrew setup might.

The Zymatic and KegSmarts combo is a case study in automation that simultaneously goes too far and yet not far enough. At roughly \$3,000 combined, PicoBrew's system is too expensive for bargain-minded home brewers, yet not automated enough for folks who want to brag about making their own beer but don't like to get their hands dirty.

To be sure, PicoBrew offers some improvements:

— The Zymatic hits the ideal temperatures and changes them as necessary. You can just flip a switch and walk away during the initial stages, when sugars get extracted out of roasted, cracked grains to produce wort. And because the Zymatic cycles wort through the grain



This photo provided by BLASTmedia shows The Zymatic by PicoBrew. The Zymatic is a home brewing system that simplifies brewing by circulating water through grains and hops at just the right temperature and time. (BLASTmedia via AP)

constantly, you don't have to rinse it with hot water to extract the last bit of sugar. — The Zymatic boils the wort and cycles it through the hops at the right time, saving you time and effort. — The Zymatic puts the finished wort into a keg, where, after cooling, you can add yeast with a special lid to let it ferment. This avoids spills.

— The KegSmarts tells you how much beer is left in each keg using a scale PicoBrew sells separately for \$129. Inside the KegSmarts, you can serve one batch cold while fermenting another batch at a warmer temperature. This requires an electric-blanket-style keg cozy, which costs another \$129.

The things PicoBrew doesn't do are significant: — It doesn't chill the wort. You need to do this, or you'll kill the yeast. Zymatic's chill option requires you to prepare a giant container full of ice to put the keg in. It's easier just to let it sit overnight or use my method — dunk the container into a sink of cold water, add ice cubes and slowly run tap water around it.

— It doesn't filter out the yeast before kegging or bottling. Because it is cycling water, you'd think the Zymatic would be able to send finished beer through a filter into another keg. Instead, you need gravity — thus the lifting — along with tubing and a siphoning tool known as a rack-

ing cane.

— Cleanup. Although the Zymatic has a clean and rinse function for parts you can't access, you still have to dump the spent grains and used hops out and wash the filters. I typically need a garden hose and a sponge for this.

The system also gives you access to an online recipe database and tools for monitoring the progress of your brew. But you need Wi-Fi — something that's weak in my garage, where I need to keep the devices because they are so big. Not having an offline option can be frustrating.

Did PicoBrew beer taste better than mine? Not really. Many variables fall outside the system — be-

ing sanitary, measuring water carefully, carbonating right, and siphoning beer off of bitter yeast with care. To me, doing those things well contributes more to good taste than the things PicoBrew takes care of.

And I lose some of the pride of saying, "I did this on my own."

But being able to walk away during the initial boil was key to brewing with little kids. As a new parent, standing around for a few hours sloshing around hot liquid isn't a luxury I have these days.

And hey, innovation is cool. I don't bet against a company with good marketing and good customer service when things go wrong, as it did a few times during testing.

PicoBrew has another gizmo coming in March. The new Pico brews a batch half as small as the Zymatic and is selling on Kickstarter for \$499 right now. The group-funding project has raised an impressive \$1.4 million. However, unlike the Zymatic, you must buy sealed packages of ingredients from PicoBrew or its craft-brewery partners. And it rewards weeks of waiting with less beer.

Innovation is a costly, messy process, just like home brewing. The PicoBrew folks have a ways to go to make this as easy as making coffee, but I'll raise a glass to them on their journey. □

Fight over net neutrality returns to appeals court

SAM HANANEL

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A long-running legal battle over government rules that require Internet providers to treat all Web traffic equally is back for another round before a federal appeals court. Cable and telecom industry groups will urge a three-judge panel on Friday to throw out regulations that forbid online content from being blocked or channeled into fast and

slow lanes. The Federal Communications Commission approved the new rules in February after its previous attempt to mandate "net neutrality" was struck down last year by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. The rules, which for the first time treat broadband like a public utility, have won praise from consumer advocates and content companies such as Netflix and crowdfunding site Kickstarter. They want

to prevent Internet service providers from manipulating data moving across their networks or offering paid preferential treatment to some content over others. But providers like Comcast, Verizon and AT&T say the FCC's move will threaten innovation and undermine investment in broadband infrastructure. The U.S. Telecom Association, an industry group, calls the latest rules "a sweeping bureaucratic power grab"

that subjects companies to "intrusive, central-planner-style oversight." In an added twist, one of the judges hearing the latest case has twice authored opinions striking down the FCC's earlier attempts to enforce net neutrality. Judge David Tatel ruled last year that the FCC rules were not grounded in legal authority because the commission at the time classified broadband as an information service. □

Strong job gains send US stock market sharply higher

MARLEY JAY
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market surged to its biggest gain since early September Friday after another strong month of hiring by U.S. employers. The solid news on the economy opened the way

turing and energy companies are struggling. The rally gained more power after European Central Bank President Mario Draghi said the ECB is ready to expand its stimulus program if necessary. That was a relief: stocks and bonds tumbled Thursday after

best day since Sept. 8, rising 42.07 points, or 2.1 percent, to 2,091.69. The Nasdaq composite increased 104.74 points, or 2.1 percent, to 5,142.27 points. When the Federal Reserve decided not to raise interest rates in September, investors gradually con-

nancial crisis and it kept it low throughout the Great Recession to encourage lending and hiring. It hasn't raised interest rates in nine years.

Davidson said the jobs data was as good as investors expected, which gives them more confidence in the state of the economy and the Fed's plans.

"The markets love predictability and this is about as predictable as you can get," he said. In addition to the jobs growth, Davidson said more people are looking for work and wages are improving.

Luke Bartholomew, investment manager Aberdeen Capital Management, said it was almost a foregone conclusion that the Fed will raise interest rates, but what isn't clear is what will happen after that.

"It would have taken a really catastrophically bad number to put the Fed off today," he said. "It's a question of what the path looks like next year."

Consumer discretionary stocks were the best performers in the S&P 500. Discount retailer Dollar Tree, toy maker Mattel and homebuilder D.R. Horton climbed, and Apple rose \$3.83, or 3.3 percent, to \$119.03, a large move for the world's most valuable company. Energy stocks, however, took a beating, and almost all of the largest losses in the S&P 500 went to energy companies. Oil cartel OPEC said it won't cut oil production even though global stockpiles keep growing. The price of oil is trading near six-year lows. □



Traders Fred DeMarco, left, and Greg Mulligan work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. The stock market surged to its biggest gain since early September on Friday after another strong month of hiring by U.S. employers.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

for the Federal Reserve to begin raising interest rates back toward normal levels later this month. Energy stocks and the price of crude oil fell after OPEC said it won't cut production.

Stocks started the day higher after the Labor Department said employers added 211,000 jobs in November. That was more than investors expected, and a sign that consumers are still spending and keeping the economy afloat even as manufac-

the ECB announced some new stimulus measures, but didn't do as much as investors expected.

"His clarification of comments he made earlier in the week gives investors confidence that ECB will continue its 'whatever is necessary' course," said Erik Davidson, chief investment officer at Wells Fargo Private Bank.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 369.96 points, or 2.1 percent, to 17,847.63. The Standard & Poor's 500 index had its

cluded that the Fed would act in December unless it received some big warning signs about the health of the economy.

Those signs never came. The September jobs report was disappointing, but hiring climbed in October, and November hiring was solid. The government also said the economy gained more jobs in September and October than it initially reported.

The Fed slashed its key short-term interest rate to near zero during the fi-

Avon shares gain ground on talk of Cerberus interest

NEW YORK (AP) — Shares of Avon Products Inc. jumped Friday as multiple media reports said the beauty products company is considering selling its North American business to private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management.

The reports come as another private equity firm, Barington Capital Group, criticized the struggling company and called for management changes and cost cuts. Barington says it has about a 3 percent stake in the New York-based company.

Avon's stock rose 31 cents, or 7.8 percent, to \$4.30 in afternoon trading. On Thursday, it gained 26 cents, or 7 percent, to close at \$3.99.

Several media outlets, including The Wall Street Journal, said Avon is close to cutting a deal with Cerberus that could involve a minority investment, board seats and the sale of part of its business.

Barington Capital sent a critical letter to Avon Chairman Douglas R. Conant, on the heels of those reports. In it, the private equity group called for cutting costs by up to \$700 million in up to 24 months by "streamlining" the company. It also called for "eliminating" its current management structure as it criticized CEO Sheri McCoy. The letter also calls for adding independent directors and Barington intends to nominate a group of candidates ahead of the company's 2016 annual meeting. "We are convinced that the addition of new independent directors to the board is a necessary first step toward developing and executing a strategy that will unlock Avon's value potential for all shareholders," Barington said in the letter. Avon has been reporting wider losses over the last several years as revenue continues to decline. The company did not comment on the report of a potential Cerberus deal, but said it is focused on taking "strategic actions" to drive growth and enhance value for shareholders. □

Norfolk Southern rejects Canadian Pacific merger

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — Norfolk Southern has rejected Canadian Pacific's cash-and-stock proposal to combine the two railroads, saying the offer is inadequate and has regulatory risks.

Last month Canadian Pacific offered more than \$28 billion for Norfolk Southern. Canadian Pacific said Friday that it disagrees with

Norfolk Southern's "mischaracterization" of the offer and is "committed to this transaction."

Norfolk Southern Corp. had said earlier Friday that its board determined the proposal had "regulatory risks and uncertainties that are highly unlikely to be overcome." In a letter sent to Canadian Pacific CEO E. Hunter Harrison and Chair-

man Andrew Reardon, Norfolk Southern said that it felt the regulatory review process for the proposed deal would take two years or more, with a very low likelihood of approval. Even if it were approved, Norfolk Southern said it would be "in limbo" for that time period, disrupting its operations. Federal regulators haven't approved

any major railroad mergers in more than 15 years. One of the only major deals in recent years is when Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate bought BNSF railroad in 2010. Shares of Norfolk Southern dropped \$1.05 to \$92.06, while Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd.'s stock fell \$6.42, or 4.6 percent, to \$134.49. □

Chicken of Sea, Bumble Bee merger canned as US objects

MARCY GORDON

AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chicken of the Sea and Bumble Bee have called off their proposed merger after the Obama administration told the companies it would hurt competition in the U.S. canned tuna market. The Justice Department announced Friday that the deal, announced

a year ago between Thailand's largest seafood company and Bumble Bee Foods of the U.S., was off. If Thai Union Group, owner of Chicken of the Sea, had bought Bumble Bee, it would have combined the second- and third-largest sellers of tinned tuna in the U.S. in a market long dominated by three major brands. The third major

brand is StarKist Co., based in Pittsburgh, a subsidiary of Dongwon Industries of Seoul, South Korea. Bumble Bee, which is owned by the British investment firm Lion Capital LLP, is based in San Diego. Tri-Union Seafoods, the Thai Union subsidiary operating as Chicken of the Sea International, also is based in San Diego. "Consumers are better off

without this deal," Assistant Attorney General Bill Baer said in a printed statement. He said the two companies knew or should have known that competition already is lacking in the canned tuna market, and more consolidation would make the situation worse. Bumble Bee CEO Chris Lischewski confirmed in a statement that the two

companies had mutually agreed to terminate the deal. "During the last year, Bumble Bee has conducted business as usual and now has a renewed focus to execute its vision for the company well into the future," Lischewski said. Representatives of Tri-Union Seafoods didn't immediately return telephone calls seeking comment. □

China announces measure to limit stock market swings

JOE McDONALD

AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese regulators announced a mechanism Friday to temporarily suspend stock trading in the event of wide price swings in the latest attempt to enforce stability in volatile markets. Trading will be halted for 15 minutes if a broad market index, the CSI 300, rises or falls by 5 percent, the China Securities Regulatory Commission announced. The measure takes effect Jan. 1. Authorities are trying to restore confidence in Chinese stocks after a plunge in prices in June prompted a panicked, multibillion-dollar government intervention. Beijing is gradually unwinding emergency controls that included a freeze on new stock offerings to stop the market plunge. The mechanism for temporary trading suspensions is intended to "safeguard market order, protect in-

vestor rights and promote orderly and healthy market development," said a statement on the websites of the stock exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen. Such "circuit breakers" are relatively common in Asian stock markets. In Thailand, trading is suspended for 30 minutes if the main market index falls 10 percent from the previous day's close. The Chinese measure also calls for trading to be suspended until the following day if, even after temporary halts, the total daily change in the CSI 300 exceeds 7 percent. The CSI 300 is made up of the 300 largest-capitalization stocks on China's exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen. It has risen or fallen by at least 5 percent on six trading days this year, most recently on Aug. 24, when it fell 7.8 percent. Before the June slump, the benchmark Shanghai Composite



A Chinese investor naps while monitoring stock prices at a brokerage house in Beijing, Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. Asian stocks sank Friday, extending a sell-off in world markets after Europe's central bank unveiled plans to stimulate the continent's ailing economy that fell short of investor expectations. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)

Index soared more than 150 percent starting late last year after state media said shares were inexpensive. That led investors to believe Beijing would prop

up prices if needed. The bubble burst after an unrelated change in banking rules in early June made investors think Beijing's support might be weakening.

The Shanghai index fell 30 percent in a few weeks but rebounded following Beijing's intervention. It has risen 20 percent from its low in early August. □

OPEC keeps oil production at its current high level

GEORGE JAHN

Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — OPEC nations decided Friday to keep producing oil at their current high levels, effectively acknowledging their inability to push up crude prices.

An attempt to nudge the cost of oil higher would have involved lowering output. Instead, the organization's endorsement of present output, which is more than 1.5 million barrels a day above the formal

ceiling of 30 million barrels, is likely to push the price of oil down further.

The ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries appeared to have little choice. Major producing nations in the cartel were opposed to reducing output. Instead, OPEC is poised to produce more oil.

Iran, which once pumped around 4 million barrels a day and is now down to about half that, is preparing to come back fully on

line once it sheds nuclear-related sanctions in a few months. Senior oil official Amir Hossein Zamaninia said last week Iran hopes to bring an extra 500,000 barrels on the market by early next year. He said he hopes the extra output will be accommodated within OPEC's formal ceiling of 30 million barrels a day.

Arriving for Friday's meeting, Iranian oil minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said Iran is ready to discuss a ceiling for its production —

but only after his country makes a "full return to the market."

Iraq is also resurgent. The country has seen the fastest rise in crude production in the world this year. It was pumping more than 4 million barrels a day last month and was responsible for last month's biggest monthly rise in output among all OPEC countries. And the ministers agreed to readmit past member Indonesia, to expand their ranks to 13. While that country's

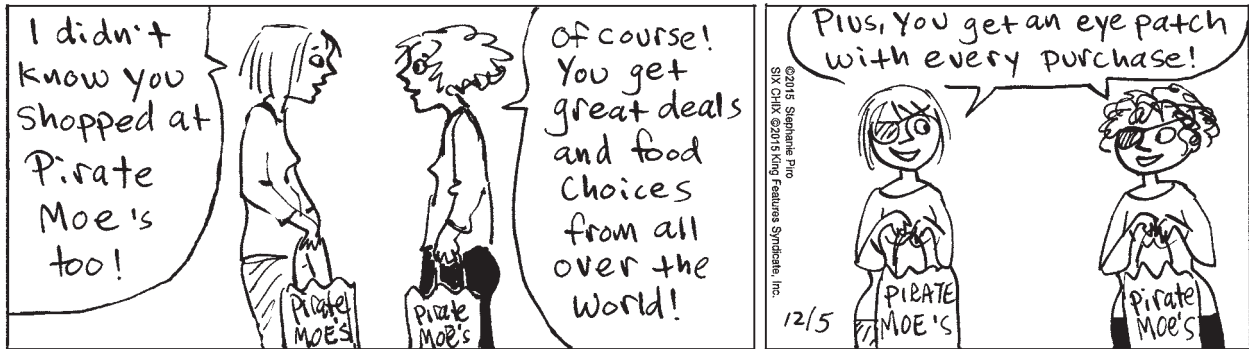
production goes mostly for domestic consumption, that move could also add some to the total amount of OPEC barrels on sale.

A final statement on the meeting was unusual in not mentioning any decision on production ceilings. But conference president Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu told reporters that there was agreement to maintain "current actual production," which is well above the formal ceiling set at 30 million barrels a day. □

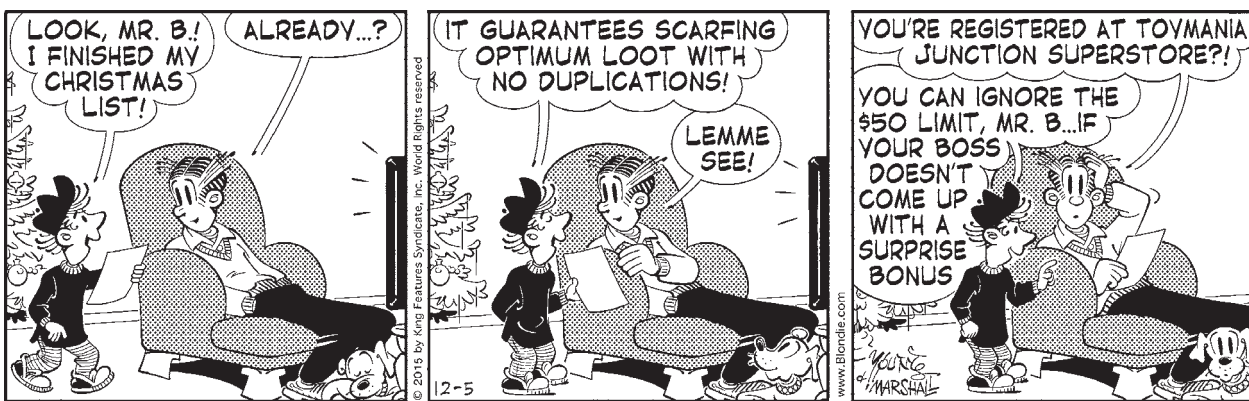
Mutts



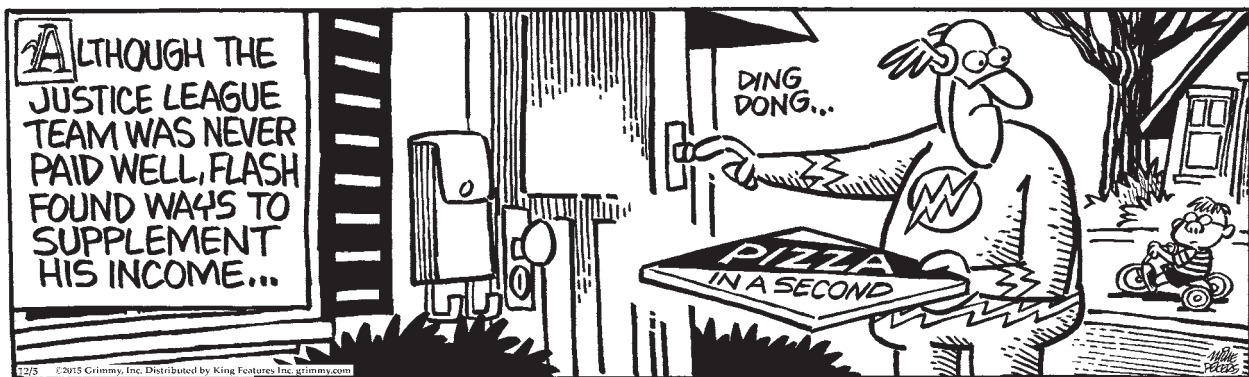
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		1		9		3		
5		1		2		7		
	3	4		8	5			
6							3	
	4	7		1	8			
1		6		7		2		
	9		5		4			

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

2	5	9	4	8	7	3	6	1
3	8	7	1	6	5	9	2	4
6	1	4	9	3	2	5	8	7
8	9	6	7	1	4	2	5	3
1	3	2	6	5	9	7	4	8
4	7	5	8	2	3	1	9	6
5	2	1	3	4	8	6	7	9
9	6	8	2	7	1	4	3	5
7	4	3	5	9	6	8	1	2

ACROSS

- Baby's bed
 - Actor Stacy
 - Filthy residue
 - Mantilla fabric
 - Two strokes under par
 - In addition
 - Pennsylvania and Fifth; abbr.
 - Oven setting
 - Mon.'s follower
 - examiner; coroner
 - Spookiest
 - Subside
 - sanctum; private place
 - Boring events
 - Tasty sandwich, for short
 - Miami, FL
 - Stood up
 - Actor Holbrook
 - Settle in cozily
 - Promos
 - Extension of a subscription
 - Battery size
 - Bee's antenna
 - Chatter
 - Undergarment
 - Tribal pole
 - Actor Baer, Jr.
 - Tropical trees
 - Last
 - Poke
 - Caught sight of
 - Cold desserts
 - Cab
 - Unclear
 - Soreness
 - Highest cards
 - board; nail file
 - "My Country, 'Tis of"
 - Inclination
 - Coral ridges
 - Sound the horn
- ## DOWN
- Happy as a
 - about; tout
 - tea; cold drink
 - Surround with armed forces
 - Shish; BBQ favorite
 - British noble
 - Not long; recently
 - Customer
 - Singer Hayes
 - Contemptuous writings
 - Helpful hint
 - up; spends
 - Lion's share
 - Big TV network
 - Refuse to obey
 - Forbidden
 - Rough; first writing attempt
 - Roper's event
 - Valuable thing
 - Embargo
 - times; constantly
 - Assert one's right to
 - Stacks
 - That woman
 - Arrest

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16		
17				18						19		
20			21			22		23				
		24			25							
26	27	28		29			30	31	32	33		
34			35			36						
37		38				39			40			
41		42			43			44				
45			46				47					
	48	49			50							
51	52	53			54			55	56	57		
58			59	60			61					
62			63				64					
65			66				67					

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/5/15

Friday's Puzzle Solved

MUNCH	CHAP	LAST
OPERA	HIDE	ACHE
POSER	IRON	BOON
ENSEMBLE	CIRRUS	
	POOL	PICANTE
LARYNX	AILED	
ONE	YEARN	DODGE
STAR	RIDER	RELY
TIMED	ROSES	LEE
	WAVER	ALLIES
SPARED	FLOE	
OILING	RAMPARTS	
LAIT	APED	IDAHO
ENCE	NINE	NEVER
DOES	SETS	GREET

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12/5/15

- Send in a payment
- Ear secretion
- Right-winger's opponent
- Day of rest
- Señora in Paris
- Golfing term
- Firm refusal
- Tiny kangaroos
- Pierce
- Walk the floor
- Plow pullers
- Ride the waves
- Resound
- At that time
- Look for
- "whiz!"

Facebook CEO \$45B organization to change the charity landscape

BRANDON BAILEY
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg is shaking up yet another sector — the charity world — with his surprise announcement that he and his wife will devote the bulk of their wealth, or about \$45 billion, to philanthropic works.

The move will eventually put him and his wife, Priscilla Chan, in the same philanthropic echelon as Bill and Melinda Gates. It also involves a new type of philanthropic structure that differs from traditional foundations, although details on that remain scarce.

Zuckerberg made his pledge on Facebook in celebration of his daughter Max's birth.

The Zuckerbergs said Tuesday they will, over time, commit 99 percent of their Facebook stockholdings to such causes as fighting disease, improving education and "building strong communities." The couple had previously pledged to give away at least half their assets during their lifetime, but hadn't provided specifics.

The announcement stunned the charity world. "It's incredibly impressive and an enormous commitment that really eclipses anything that we've seen in terms of size," said Phil Buchanan, president of the nonprofit Center for Effective Philanthropy.

The new organization, called the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, will pursue its initiatives through a combination of charitable donations, private investment and promotion of government-policy reform.

By comparison, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has an endowment of just over \$41 billion, which includes wealth donated by the Microsoft founder and his friend, the businessman Warren Buffett.

The new initiative will be organized as a limited liability company, however, rather than as a nonprofit foundation. "They want the most flexibility and they are going to use a wide variety of activities to achieve their mission," Rachael Horwitz, a Facebook spokeswoman, said via email. "So in that way this is not a foundation nor is it entirely charitable."

The notion of investing money in companies that tackle social issues isn't new, but it has gained more currency among a younger generation of philanthropists, particularly in the tech world.

Zuckerberg has also shown a previous interest in influencing public policy. He led other prominent Silicon Valley figures in forming a group, FWD.us, that lobbied and gave donations to congressional candidates in an unsuccessful effort to promote immigration reforms. □

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Concierge Realty



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• 3 BEDRM ov \$29K
• Plat. Plus NY 52 ov \$54K

PLATINUM Season
Oceanview \$16K
Oceanside \$17500
Oceanfront \$27,500
3 BEDRM OV \$29K
Plat. Plus Holiday 51 OV \$46k
Plat. Plus NY 52 OV \$54K

GOLD Season
Oceanside \$9900
Oceanview \$9K
Oceanfront \$14,500
3 BEDRM OV \$17K

Marriott Aruba Ocean club

GOLD Season
2B Ocean view \$9K
2B Oceanfront \$14500
1B Oceanfront \$8500

PLATINUM Season
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wk 40	room 336	\$3,750
wk 40	room 105	\$5,000
wk 42	room 338	\$4,000
wk 43	room 329	\$3,250
wk 49	room 144	\$5,500
wk 49	room 571	\$3,750
wk 48	room 517	\$3,750
wk 48 or 49	room 119	\$4,750
wk 48 or 49	room 551	\$5,500
wk 49 or 50	room 203	\$5,500
wk 21 or 22	room 347	\$4,000
wk 51	room 347	\$12,500

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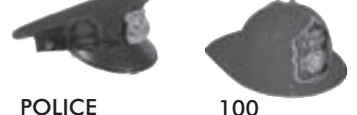
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FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
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CENTRO MEDICO	523-8833

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San Nicolas: San Nicolas Tel: 584-5712

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PROF. TAXI	588-0035
TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
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Europe probe tests tech for detecting ripples in space time

FRANK JORDANS
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP)—The European Space Agency launched a rocket Thursday to carry two cubes of gold and platinum almost a million miles from Earth so scientists can see how they'll behave in a freefall — at a cost of more than \$450 million.

What may sound like a frivolous enterprise is actually the prelude to a far more ambitious mission that hopes to measure ripples in space time caused by black holes and other massive objects lurking unseen in dark corners of the galaxy.

Also known as gravitational waves, these ripples were predicted by Albert Einstein a century ago but have never been directly detected.

In order for that mission — tentatively scheduled for launch in 2034 — to succeed, the European Space Agency first has to test whether it can shield objects from external influences well enough to measure the minute effects of gravitational waves.

"We want to see whether we can create an environment in orbit that's free of interference, and where we can conduct these high-precision measurements," said Michael Menking, senior vice president for



This picture taken with remote point 1 camera and provided by the European Space Agency, ESA, shows the liftoff of Vega VV06 rocket carrying LISA Pathfinder on Thursday Dec. 3, 2015 from Europe's Spaceport, Kourou French Guiana. The European Space Agency on Thursday launched a rocket carrying two cubes of gold and platinum almost a million miles from Earth so that scientists can see how they'll behave in free fall — at a cost of more than US \$450 million. (Stephane Corvaja/ESA via AP)

Earth observation, navigation and science at Airbus Defense and Space. The company is the main tech-

nology contractor on the LISA Pathfinder mission. The probe separated from the Vega rocket two hours

after its launch from ESA's space port in French Guiana at 1:04 a.m. local time (0404 GMT) Thursday.

"We have a mission," project scientist Paul McNamara said to cheers and hugs at the control rooms in Kourou and Darmstadt, Germany, after receiving the first signal from the spacecraft.

By mid-January, the probe will have reached an orbit about 1.5 million kilometers (930,000 miles) from Earth, where the pull from the planet's gravity is balanced by that of the sun. The cubes — made from gold and platinum to reduce their susceptibility to magnetic fields — are then carefully released inside a box that shields them from cosmic particles and other interference that might affect the measurements performed by a sensitive laser. The laser is capable of detecting movements of less than 10 millionths of a millionth of a meter.

"Our biggest enemy is the light from the sun that hits the satellite and pushes it around," said Oliver Jennrich, a scientist working on the LISA Pathfinder mission. To counter this, the satellite uses NASA-supplied thrusters capable of making tiny corrections to the probe's position to keep it in the right orbit and prevent the free-falling cubes from crashing into the inside of the box. This should provide a near-perfect cosmic isolation chamber to measure the effect of gravitational waves, said Jennrich.

The LISA Pathfinder mission itself won't detect any gravitational waves, though. Because the two 2-kilogram (4.4-pound) cubes are only 38 centimeters apart, any object big enough to affect their relative position would have to be so huge

it would be visible with the naked eye, said Jennrich.

Instead, the real measurements will likely have to wait almost two decades for the follow-up mission, provisionally called LISA. It will involve three satellites positioned in a triangle 5 million kilometers apart from each other. Together they should be able to detect gravitational waves caused by enormous objects such as supermassive black holes, like the one that's thought to sit at the center of the Milky Way.

Jennrich said measuring gravitational waves would also allow scientists to peer through the dust and debris that obscures much of what's going on at the center of the galaxy.

By the time LISA is launched, ground-based experiments may have already succeeded in detecting gravitational waves for the first time, said Toby Wiseman, a physicist at Imperial College, London, who isn't involved with the space project.

But because of the interference they suffer on Earth, ground-based experiments will likely be limited to measuring the extreme bursts of gravitational waves that occur during rare, dramatic events. "Space-based gravitational wave detectors will detect gravitational waves that are not accessible by any other experiment: massive black holes at the center of galaxies colliding and merging into a larger black hole; smaller black holes swirling around massive black holes before falling in; and pairs of white dwarfs in our galaxy," said Gabriela Gonzalez, a professor of physics and astronomy at Louisiana State University who works on the LIGO detector near Livingston, Louisiana. □

Weather delays critical space station shipment

MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — It's another no-go for the first space station supply run in months from the U.S. For the second day in a row, the weather at Cape Canaveral, Florida, delayed the launch of much-needed food and other astronaut supplies Fri-

day. Gusty wind prevented the unmanned rocket from lifting off at dusk with 7,400 pounds of supplies for the International Space Station. Thursday's launch attempt was rained out. The next opportunity is Saturday. Once again, poor weather is forecast. The six space station astronauts have gone without

U.S. shipments since April. That's because of launch accidents by NASA's two commercial suppliers. Still grounded in Virginia, Orbital ATK bought another company's rocket, the veteran Atlas, to get supplies moving again and fulfill its NASA contract. The SpaceX company also remains grounded. □



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'Good Morning America' wondering where viewers went



George Stephanopoulos appears on ABC's "Good Morning America" show in New York. The show is in its first prolonged slump since overtaking NBC's "Today" in popularity three years ago. "GMA" is losing viewers, most rapidly among a younger demographic that advertisers eagerly seek, where NBC has wrested back the lead from its rival.

(AP Photo/Charles Sykes)

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — For the past few years, turning on ABC's "Good Morning America" was like happening upon a joyous party. Robin Roberts, George Stephanopoulos and their pals all seemed nice, and looked like they loved being together. It was almost always a good time.

The party isn't over. But it's getting late. Television's top morning show is in its first prolonged slump since overtaking NBC's "Today" in popularity three years ago. "GMA" is losing viewers, most rapidly among a younger demographic that advertisers eagerly seek, where NBC has wrested back the lead from its rival.

The search is on for those missing viewers, many of whom ABC executives suspect have turned off morning television altogether, and for ways to lure them back.

The "Good Morning America" typical daily audience is 4.9 million, or 11 percent smaller than last season, the Nielsen company said. Among 25-to-54-year-olds, the decline is 19 percent.

"Today" now leads among that group not because it is surging — the NBC show is down 4 percent from last year — but because it is losing audience more slowly. The demo number is the key to a vault, since advertisers check it first when making spending decisions.

"Today" is feeling bullish. Its team is clicking, with Matt Lauer appearing more comfortable than he has in years. The show's aggressiveness in seeking interviews has paid off, most recently with Charlie Sheen's revelation that he is HIV-positive.

But ABC's bigger concern may be smartphones on the bedside table. Morning television usage peaked at 40.7 million viewers three years ago and has dropped by two million since, Nielsen said. Some people who used to turn on TV for a quick check of the headlines and weather now likely do that online.

To that end, "GMA" executives are emphasizing live events and features to convey a sense that people will be missing out on something important if they don't turn on the TV.

They turned to social media, for example, to heavily promote Roberts' interview with Kobe Bryant this week. "Good Morning America" has suffered turnover the past couple of years, with Josh Elliott leaving for NBC Sports and Sam Champion for The Weather Channel. The short-term ratings impact was minimal, but long-term may be different.

"It's really who you want to spend time with for two hours in the morning," said Brad Adgate, an analyst for Horizon Media, "and they may have done something to change the mix of what people are comfortable with."

One thing beyond a television producer's control is the cultural zeitgeist, and a sense that a program is no longer in tune with the times.


To some, the "GMA" celebration of its 40th anniversary last month less than a week after the Paris attacks felt jarring. This is a serious, newsy stretch of time, with people on edge over terrorism and mass shootings on an endless loop. Next year's presidential election has attracted unprecedented attention a year in advance. Morning shows are a combination of news and entertainment, and nothing annoys ABC executives more than a suggestion they don't have the news chops to compete. Yet while "GMA" ratings are down this season, the more sober and traditional "CBS This Morning" is up 7 percent in viewers.

"The show should become George-centric again," said former ABC and CBS morning show producer Shelley Ross, suggesting Stephanopoulos' political expertise is an asset for an election year.

The risk in shifting to a heavier news emphasis is that the people who came to "GMA" because it looked

like the cast was having fun and was quickest to laugh at the latest viral pet video may say, "this isn't what I signed up for." ABC executives aren't talking publicly about what's

going on with the show and, privately, they're not fully sure what has happened to the "Good Morning America" audience. They don't feel it is a rejection of the show. □



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SAT 2:25 | 5:05 | 8:00 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 2:25 | 5:05 | 8:00

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SAT 3:30 | 6:20 | 9:10 | 12:05
SUN & HOL 3:30 | 6:20 | 9:10

KRAMPOS
ADAM SCOTT | TONI COLLETTE
MON-THURS 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35
FRI 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35 | 11:50
SAT 2:50 | 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:50 | 5:05 | 7:20 | 9:35

ikJa wil!
DUTCH VERSION
DANIEL RADCLIFF | JAMES MCAVOY
MON-FRI 4:40 | 6:55
SAT 2:25 | 4:40 | 6:55
SUN & HOL 2:25 | 4:40 | 6:55

ALSO SHOWING!

THE NIGHT BEFORE
JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT | SETH ROGEN
MON-THURS 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30
FRI 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SAT 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 2:30 | 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30

SPECTRE 007
DANIEL CRAIG | CHRISTOPH WALTZ
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 5:45 | 8:50
FRI 5:45 | 8:50
SAT 2:40 | 5:45 | 8:50
SUN & HOL 2:40 | 5:45 | 8:50

THE GOOD DINOSAUR
JEFFREY WRIGHT | FRANCES MCDORMAND
Disney • PIXAR
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
3D VERSION
MON-FRI 4:50 | 7:05
SAT 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05
2D VERSION
MON-THURS 4:10 | 6:25 | 8:40
FRI 4:10 | 6:25 | 8:40 | 10:55
SAT 1:55 | 4:10 | 6:25 | 8:40 | 10:55
SUN & HOL 1:55 | 4:10 | 6:25 | 8:40

THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY PART 2
JENNIFER LAWRENCE | JOSH HUTCHERSON
MON-FRI 9:10
SAT 9:10
SUN & HOL 9:10

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN
DANIEL RADCLIFF | JAMES MCAVOY
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON-THURS 9:20
FRI-SAT 9:20 | 11:45
SUN & HOL 9:20

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Ex-Stone Temple Pilots frontman Weiland dead at 48

BLOOMINGTON, Minnesota (AP) — Scott Weiland, the former frontman for the Stone Temple Pilots and

land, who was dogged by substance abuse problems throughout his career, passed away in his

elsewhere in the bus and arrested a California man who was traveling with Weiland. The man hasn't

Weiland's wife, Jamie Weiland, also confirmed his death to the Los Angeles Times.

"I can't deal with this right now," she said, sobbing. "It's true."

The singer rose to fame as the frontman of the Grammy Award-winning Stone Temple Pilots, whose hits include "Interstate Love Song," "Plush," and "Vaseline."

The band broke up in 2003, and Weiland went on to front Velvet Revolver, the super group that featured former members of Guns N' Roses, including guitarist Slash and bassist Duff McKagan. Among that group's hits was "Fall to Pieces."

The Stone Temple Pilots eventually reunited in 2008. "The story's not finished," Weiland told the AP at the time. "There's more to be revealed and more to be told."

But the group split again in 2013.

Weiland had a long string of drug- and alcohol-related arrests and stints in rehab. In 1995, he was arrested after deputies found him carrying crack and heroin. He pleaded guilty to felony heroin possession in 1998. And his arrests for drug possession and stints in rehab led the Stone Temple Pilots to cancel tour dates and contributed to their 2003 breakup. □



In this 2004 photo, Velvet Revolver lead singer Scott Weiland, left, and Slash perform "Fall to Pieces" at the VH1 Big in '04 awards, in Los Angeles. Weiland, the former frontman for the Stone Temple Pilots and Velvet Revolver, has died. He was 48. The singer's manager confirmed the death to The Associated Press early Friday, Dec. 4, 2015. (AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)

Velvet Revolver, has died. He was 48.

The singer's manager, Tom Vitorino, confirmed the death to The Associated Press early Friday morning. Vitorino said he learned of Weiland's death from his tour manager. He did not provide further details but referenced a statement on Weiland's Facebook page.

The statement said Wei-

land sleep while on a tour stop in Bloomington, Minnesota. The local coroner confirmed the death Friday but didn't cite a cause.

Police said they found cocaine in the bedroom of the tour bus where Weiland was found dead.

Police said they found "a small quantity" of cocaine during a search of the bus Friday, they also found a small amount of cocaine

been charged.

Police released no additional information on Weiland's cause of death.

Weiland's current band, Scott Weiland & the Wildabouts, had been scheduled to play a show in nearby Medina, Minnesota, according to a local venue's website. The website showed the event was canceled but didn't give a reason.

POP BRIEFS

Robert Loggia, TV and movie tough guy, is dead at 85

Robert Loggia, who played drug lords and mobsters and danced with Tom Hanks in "Big," has died, his wife Aubrey Loggia says.

Aubrey Loggia said Loggia died Friday at his home in Los Angeles after a five year battle with Alzheimer's. He was 85.

Loggia's rugged looks and voice suited his many character roles as gangsters or other shady characters. He was a Miami drug lord in "Scarface" and a Sicilian mobster in "Prizzi's Honor." He earned an Oscar nomination for the 1985 legal thriller, "Jagged Edge."

But perhaps his most memorable role was a comic turn as the toy company boss in "Big." In a famous scene, he and Hanks, as a boy in a man's body, dance on a giant toy keyboard in joyful duets of "Chopsticks" and "Heart and Soul." □

'Orange' actress Polanco charged in NY on assault

NEW YORK (AP) — One of the stars of "Orange Is the New Black" is facing assault charges after she was accused of punching and scratching a teenage girl. Dascha Polanco was arraigned Thursday in Manhattan Criminal Court.

Court papers filed by the district attorney's office say the attack on 17-year-old Michelle Cardona happened inside Polanco's upper Manhattan apartment on July 29. They say Polanco punched the teen several times, pulled her hair and scratched her. Polanco's attorney, Gerald Lefcourt, says the accusation is an attempt to extort money from the actress. He says he is confident the charges will be dismissed. The 33-year-old Polanco plays inmate Dayonara Diaz on the Netflix prison drama.

Her next real-life court date is Jan. 28. □

Michael Douglas says cancer survival led to resurgence

NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — An emotional Michael Douglas said Thursday that surviving his cancer scare several years ago gave him new vitality as he settles into his senior years.

Douglas, 71, spoke about his health at an AARP luncheon celebrating the Academy Award-winner's storied career and said: "It's good to be alive." Douglas battled stage four throat cancer in 2010.

"Once you come out of that end, you have a resurgence, certainly of energy," he told the crowd at

the renowned restaurant Le Bernardin.

Douglas had his own celebrity cheering section as he was given AARP's "Movies for Grownups" Lifetime Achievement Award.

Besides his wife, fellow Oscar-winner Catherine Zeta-Jones, his "Ant-Man" co-star Paul Rudd, his "Fatal Attraction" co-star Glen Close, Blythe Danner, David Hyde Pierce, Zac Posen and Jann Wenner attended.

Close joked: "I love Michael so much that I stopped coloring my hair so I can look like him."

Douglas called "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," which he produced, his most profound work, and noted that it was turned down at every Hollywood studio before its eventual release. He also attributed his longevity to picking the best film to work on instead of the best role.

"The greatest compliment I could get is that I see your name, and I don't know what I'm gonna get but it's going to be good," he said.

His voice cracked when he thanked his wife for her support; the couple separated a couple of years

ago but reconciled, and Douglas noted the pair were celebrating their 15th anniversary this year.

He also got political, railing against super PACs that give large contributions to political candidate, blaming them for viciousness in the presidential campaign climate.

He also cited Wednesday's deadly mass shooting in San Bernardino, California, in asking for people of different political beliefs to unite on a common gun control solution, so "we cannot be completely embarrassed" before the rest of the world. □

Review: Spike Lee's blistering 'Chi-Raq' burns with rage

JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

More alive than most of the year's films put together, Spike Lee's "Chi-Raq" is urgent agitprop that pulsates with unalloyed rage for the "self-inflicted genocide" of South Chicago and explodes with full-hearted (and gloriously lewd) pleas for peace.

It's wildly uneven but it is wild. There's plenty here to quibble with (the film's title prompted outrage in Chicago), but unassailable is its passion to bring attention and compassion to Chicago's blood-soaked streets.

"This is an emergency" flashes across the screen early in "Chi-Raq," a hip-hop musical and a social satire that Lee co-wrote with Kevin Willmott ("C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America") and sets to the beat of Terence Blanchard's score. It's an updating of Aristophanes' ancient Greek comedy "Lysistrata," in which Athenian women wage a sex strike against their warrior men to end the Peloponnesian War. Lee and Willmott have transplanted the tale to Chicago, where the murder rate has far surpassed the number of Americans killed in Iraq.

Lee is best as a megaphone for street-level outrage. Whereas most filmmakers gradually ebb in

spiritedness as they age, Lee — in good and not-so-good films — has remained uniquely unpredictable and remarkably prolific. His last great film, 2006's "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts," fed off the fury of New Orleans residents after Hurricane Katrina.

"Chi-Raq," which takes its title from the controversial nickname for the violence-plagued city, is Lee's most vital film at least since then. It's a farce, wrapped heavily in stylistic overtures, with maybe a half-dozen introductions to Chicago and to "Chi-Raq," including Nick Cannon's "Pray 4 My City," played with lyrics blazed across the screen, and Samuel Jackson's pimp-like narrator, Dolmedes, who raps, "We can't take this much more."

The story takes a long time to arrive, and when it does, it and the characters remain secondary to the overall frenzy of the movie, all of which is in rhyming verse. Here, Lysistrata is played by Teyonah Parris ("Dear White People"). She's the girlfriend of Cannon's gun-toting gangbanger, also named Chi-Raq. His gang is the Spartans, while the Trojans are led by Wesley Snipes' Cyclops. Inspired by the Liberian activist Leymah Gbowee, Lysistrata organizes a "total abstinence



This photo provided by Roadside Attractions and Amazon Studios shows Samuel L. Jackson as Dolmedes in Spike Lee's film, "Chi-Raq." The movie opened in U.S. theaters on Dec. 4, 2015. (Parrish Lewis/Roadside Attractions/AP)

from knocking the boots" among the women of the Spartans and Trojans to stop the gang warfare. Many scenes aren't about strictly advancing the story line but rather deepening the pain, outrage and absurdity. Particularly good is Dave Chappelle's cameo, in which he, at a strip club, frets about "the penis power grid" being shut down. Some scenes don't work, particularly a cartoonish one with a racist Dixieland general (David Patrick Kelly), who ends up straddling a Civil War cannon in

Confederate flag underpants. John Cusack as the Rev. Mike Corridan, who preaches at a funeral, is jarringly bad casting. There's also a lingering feeling that in bringing the gender roles of ancient Greece to present-day South Chicago, Lee has reduced modern women to sex objects (albeit empowered ones) and men to libido-driven dogs. But the outrageousness — the madness — is the point. In Chicago, Lee sees a seemingly helpless, tragic situation and he's mar-

shalled all of himself — every ridiculous rhyme, every bit of bombast — for a truly impassioned film. By the time "Chi-Raq" reaches its powerful climax, he has made a sensational, stirring case for love, not war.

"Chi-Raq," an Amazon Studios and Roadside Attractions release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "strong sexual content including dialogue, nudity, language, some violence and drug use." Running time: 127 minutes. Four stars out of four. □

Review: Al Pacino rascally in Mamet's flat 'China Doll'

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There's no understudy for Al Pacino in David Mamet's new Broadway play "China Doll" — and nor could there be. No one else could possibly fit into the main character — a bluster, charming and venal political mover and shaker — like Pacino. The part has been tailored for him like the snappy three-piece Giorgio Armani suit he lounges in. And while the Oscar- and Tony-winner is impossible to stop watching — mostly because he



Al Pacino appears during a performance in "China Doll" at the Schoenfeld Theatre in New York. (JD/JR Associates via AP)

never leaves the stage and also because the only other character is an assistant

— the play itself is a meandering one-note character study of a doomed man.

"China Doll," which opened Thursday at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre, is basically a series of one-sided conversations between Pacino's king maker Mickey Ross and various others in the 1 percent income bracket: his lawyer, much-younger lover, hotel employees, luxury private jet company officials and other bigwigs. We meet Ross in a sort of well-appointed limbo, in a beautifully furnished, tasteful apartment by scenic designer Derek McLane. He's poised to run away from his dog-eat-dog ex-

istence — "Walking away with the brass ring and the pretty girl," he says — but his new jet has been impounded. Thus begins an interminable series of conversations about plane tail numbers, sales tax and jet registration. Pacino is, at this point in his career, unable to be anything but Pacino, equal parts "Hooah!" from "Scent of a Woman" and the satanic figure in "Devil's Advocate."

he's a glib, profane, funny bully. (But when he talks to his lady friend, a wonderful tender, weakness emerges.) □



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